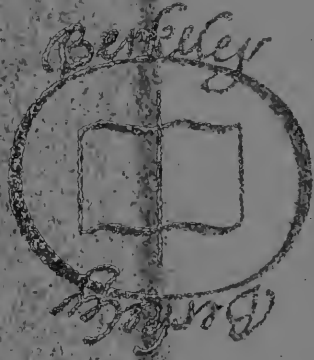
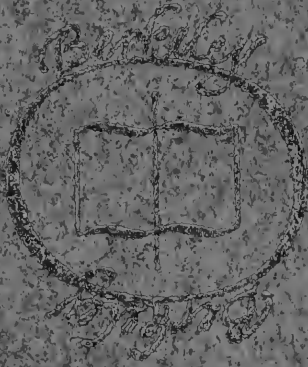


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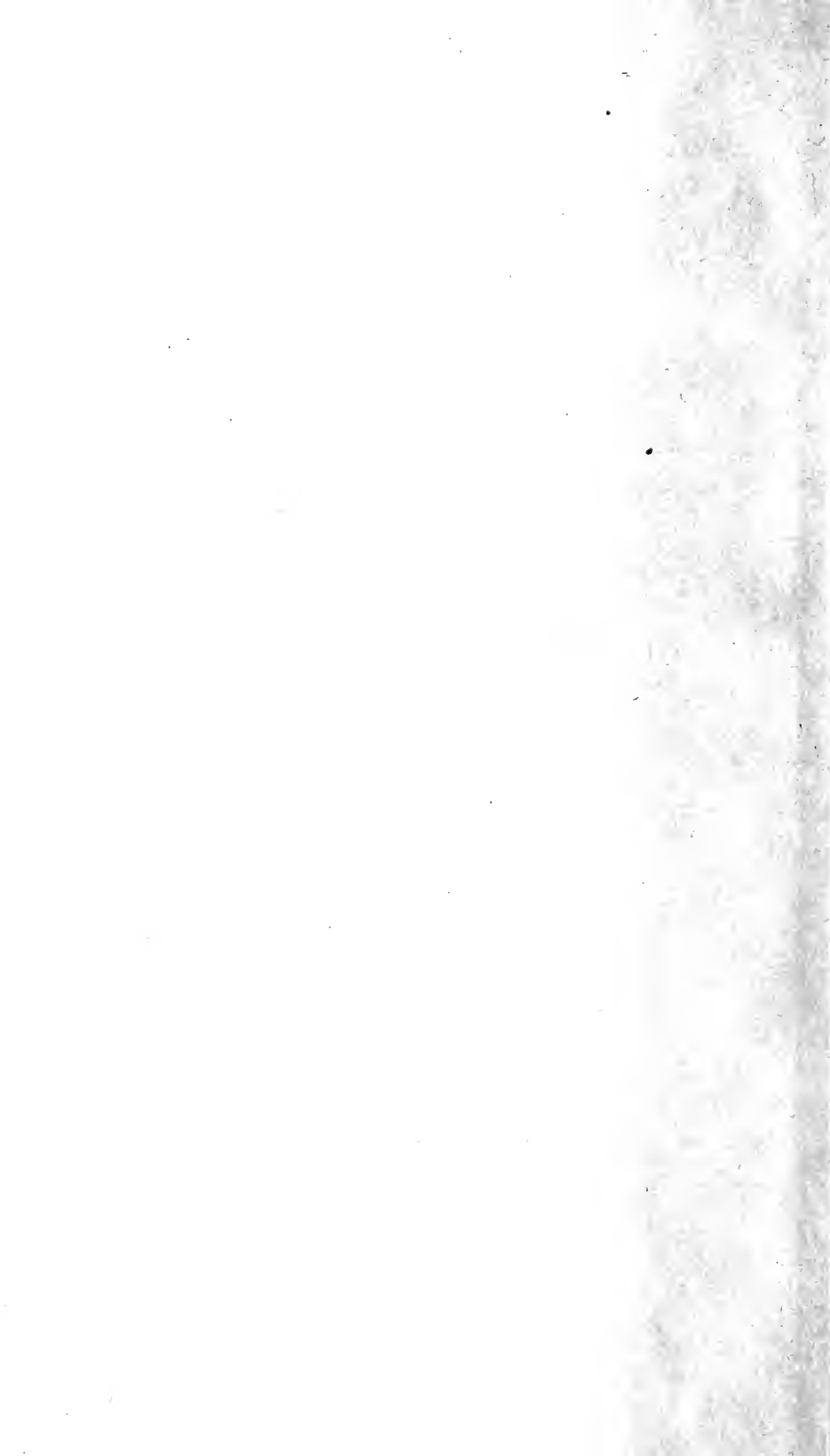
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PAST FEELINGS RENOVATED;

OR,

I D E A S

OCCASIONED BY THE PERUSAL OF

“ DR. HIBBERT'S “ PHILOSOPHY OF APPARITIONS.”

WRITTEN WITH THE VIEW OF

COUNTERACTING ANY SENTIMENTS APPROACHING MATERIALISM, WHICH
THAT WORK, HOWEVER UNINTENTIONAL ON THE PART OF THE
AUTHOR, MAY HAVE A TENDENCY TO PRODUCE.

“ Man does with dangerous curiosity
These unfathom'd wonders try:
With fancy'd rules and arbitrary laws
Matter with motion he restrains;
And studied lines, and fictious circles draws:
Then with imagin'd sovereignty
Lord of his new *hypothesis* he reigns.”

MATTHEW PRIOR.



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P R E F A C E.

THE idea of the present Essay first arose from a correspondence, wherein Dr. Hibbert's 'Philosophy of Apparitions' was mentioned, as offering a novel and ingenious theory to account for these mysterious and interesting phenomena.

In the perusal, however, I could not avoid being forcibly impressed with the importance of the subject, and the total inadequacy of the theory, satisfactorily to account for many of the best authenticated relations, which, of course, are those most worthy of unbiassed discussion. The general tendency of the work, and the evident fallacy of many of the arguments in support of opinions too nearly approaching to Materialism, induced me to give the subject that serious consideration which it imperatively demands. The result I now venture to lay before the public, premising, in the words of an impartial and erudite historian of the Christian Church*, that, "I fairly warn the reader not to expect from me any indulgence in the

* J. Milner—Introduction.

modern taste of scepticism. I shall not affect to doubt the credibility of ancient respectable historians. And as it is hardly possible to avoid altogether the infection of the age in which one lives, I seem to myself sufficiently secured, by the torrent of prevailing opinions, from the other extreme of superstitious belief. Both ought to be avoided ; but that which supports itself by the appearance of extraordinary sense, by the authority of great names, and by the love of applause, must, of course, be the more ensnaring. The present age, in matters of religion, may justly be called the age of self-sufficiency. We condemn the ancients by wholesale, and without giving them a hearing : we suspect their historical accounts, without discrimination : malevolence and profaneness are both encouraged by such conduct ; we fancy ourselves so ENLIGHTENED, as to be without any parallel in discernment : we are amazed that our ancestors should so long have been deluded by absurdities ; and we are very little aware how much some future age will pity and blame us for follies, of which we imagine ourselves perfectly clear.’

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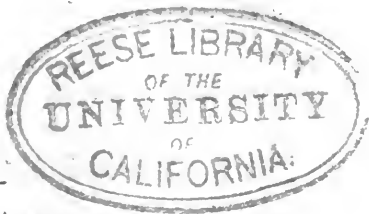
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The first of these is the fact that the
 government has been successful in
 maintaining a high level of
 economic growth. This has been
 achieved through a combination of
 sound fiscal and monetary policy
 and a strong commitment to
 social and economic reform. The
 result has been a steady increase
 in the standard of living for
 the vast majority of the
 population. This has been
 particularly true in the case of
 the lower income groups, who
 have seen a significant
 improvement in their
 living conditions. The
 government has also been
 successful in maintaining
 a high level of social
 stability. This has been
 achieved through a combination
 of a strong legal system and
 a commitment to social
 justice. The result has been
 a steady increase in the
 level of social and economic
 development. This has been
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 income groups, who have
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 improvement in their
 living conditions.



PAST FEELINGS RENOVATED.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.—SHAKSPEARE.

THE very interesting work which has been the more immediate cause of the present Essay, is the production of a professional gentleman of such acknowledged talent and research, as would, undoubtedly, under other circumstances, have deterred me from any attempt to contravene his opinions, had I not, upon mature consideration, and a sense of the importance of the subject, conceived that I should be, in some measure, censurable in withholding from the public those views on the subject which are here attempted to be illustrated. The sincerity with which I now venture to offer them for consideration, may, I trust, claim that indulgence in their perusal, of which they must necessarily stand so much in need.

Dr. Hibbert, in treating on the subject of Apparitions, evidently endeavours to account for such singular appearances solely by philosophical reasoning; and thence attempts to establish a theory which may be capable of affording some reasonable explanation of these interesting phenomena.

In pursuing this investigation, his principal aim appears to be an endeavour to prove the fallacy of certain appearances—for he does not attempt to deny their occurrence—by supposing them to have only an ideal existence, arising, for the most part, if not wholly, from certain morbid temperaments of the system: in accordance with which, it may be requisite to observe, that he considers *sensations* as “states of the mind, induced by objects *actually present*, and acting upon the organs of sense;” *ideas* being “renewals of *past sensations**;” or, as he elsewhere expresses it, “past feelings renovat†;” while *spectral illusions* are “recollected images of the mind‡;” and *apparitions* “past feelings renovat§:” so that, if I have properly comprehended the subject, an apparition or spectral illusion is to be considered as nothing more than an idea, or past feeling renovat by means of sensations, induced by objects actually present,

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 215 first edit. or 274 second edit.

† Ib. p. 287 first edit, or 246 second edit.

‡ Ib. p. 101 first edit. or 133 second edit.

§ Ib. p. 362 first edit. or 305 second edit.

acting on the organs of sense, or from morbid conditions producing a similar effect.

Previously to entering more fully on the subject, it may be well to consider how far the preceding may be just definitions of the terms as most commonly understood; for, on a correct definition of terms much must of course depend, in the arguments relating to them; it may, therefore, I hope, be allowed, to offer a few preliminary remarks before attempting to proceed with more important matter.

With respect to *ideas*, I must presume to differ from Dr. Hibbert, who seems to give too limited a view of the term; he considers them as “past feelings renovated through the medium of the organs of sense*,” and, consequently, depending not on *conception*, but on *memory*, aided by the instrumentality of the material organs.

An *idea*, according to Locke †, is, whatever the mind perceives in itself—the result of sensation or reflection; and may therefore be, and has been, more properly defined as “the image of anything *conceived* in the mind,”—“an *original, primary*, and uncompounded perception of the mind;” and thus may, or may not, depend on the memory

* Philosophy of Apparitions, pp. 180. 215. 286. 288, &c. first edit. or 274. 244. 246. second edit.

† Locke, Book ii. cap. 8.

renovated by outward sensations ; for, says another author, “ impressions do not necessarily form ideas,” otherwise the mind must be considered as incapable of any *novel conceptions*, an assertion which, I think, can hardly be borne out by facts.

If it be said, that no ideas arise in the mind but of objects previously known, or various combinations of them, even allowing this dubious assertion, does it prove that “ ideas are no more than past feelings renovated ?” With equal propriety it might be maintained, that any novel specimen of architecture is not a new building, being only the materials of some former incongruous scene under a different arrangement. But *are there no new ideas ?* What were the plans of Brindley, the late Duke of Bridgwater’s architect ?—plans unaided by previous observation, or even a knowledge of figures or computation. The calculations of George Bidder, Thomas Lidden, and others, to an astonishing extent, by mental conception, cannot come within the description of “ past feelings renovated through the organs of sense,” since these singularly vivid ideas are wholly mental, and from novel conceptions, probably in all cases, in some have been proved to be so. It might, perhaps, not unreasonably be asked—“ Is Dr. Hibbert’s hypothesis only a past feeling renovated ? Are the inventive faculties which so frequently

give birth to various discoveries in science and the arts, as practically illustrated in numerous instances, nothing but past feelings renovatèd?" Surely Van Helmont's suggestion, that "the soul can create ideas," is more consonant to right reason and the verity of daily experience.

That ideas are nothing more than "past feelings renovatèd," and that "organs of sense are the actual medium through which past feelings are renovatèd*," is a definition which cannot be maintained; because, this limits the production of ideas wholly to a material origin; a position, the fallacy of which is evident, since, "it must be obvious," as is justly remarked by Dr. Good †, "that the mind is possessed of many ideas which it could not derive from a material source: such are all those that relate to abstract moral truths and pure mathematics. And to account for these, it was a doctrine of the Platonic philosophy, that, besides the sensible world, there is an intelligible world; that the mind of man is equally connected with both, though the latter cannot possibly be discerned by corporeal organs."

Moreover, as, according to 'The Philosophy of Apparitions,' "ideas are most vivid when sensations are less so"—(which, indeed, is a fact demonstrable

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 288 first edit. or 246 second edit.

† See Dr. Good's Book of Nature, vol. iii. p. 67.

from our own perceptions)—it should appear, that so far from ideas depending on the organs of sense, the converse must be nearer the truth. It would, therefore, perhaps, be more correct to define an idea, simply as being a *mental conception*, whether it arise from outward impressions, from recollection of previous ideas, or from novel mental perceptions; and in this view it would necessarily follow, that *sensations* are properly a species of ideas—to wit, mental conceptions of corporeal operations, conveyed through the material organs of sense*.

I cannot conceive that the learned author of "The Philosophy of Apparitions" can be justified in assimilating, as he does, the terms, apparition, spectral illusion, phantasm, and idea; for, if so, every supernatural appearance could be only the renovated idea of some object seen at a previous period; the fallacy of which (if well authenticated accounts are to be credited) must be self-evident,

* Baron Cuvier has some observations bearing on this point. He says, that "During our waking moments, as our senses are continually acted upon by surrounding objects, they are constantly receiving impressions of various kinds. These impressions, however, do not necessarily form ideas; we see objects, we hear sounds, we touch bodies; but all these impressions may be utterly inconsequential in regard to our intelligence, and take place without producing a single idea; but if the stimulus of some want or desire produce the preparatory act of which we have been speaking,—in other words, if we place ourselves in a state of attention, and fix that attention on an object by which our senses are impressed, one or many ideas are the immediate result."—That is, if we mentally will it, we use our corporeal organs as subservient to—not the cause of—ideas.

and may be proved from some of the relations inserted in Dr. Hibbert's own work, the truth of which he does not attempt to call in question. And it is demonstrable, that the impression, which we call a supernatural appearance, must be either an idea of which the materials have never before existed in the mind, or an idea compounded of previously-received impressions. If the former, it follows that the idea is innate, or that a supernatural appearance has taken place. If the latter, it does not necessarily disprove such appearance, since it is most reasonable to suppose, that in such cases, in order to produce the intended conviction in the recipient, the object would assume, in form and garb, the nearest possible resemblance of personal or local identity. For

What surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
As may express them best.—MILTON.

An *apparition* can only mean that appearance which, assuming some certain form, is cognizable by mental perception alone; and, as such, not subject to the action or demonstration of our material sensations. A spectral illusion is, in some degree, a contradiction in terms; for, till it is proved that spectral objects are not mentally experienced, they might more properly be termed spectral scenes. Correctly speaking, spectral illu-

sions may be very justly explained as things viewed through some uncertain or deceptive medium—such as a dense atmosphere, or the evening twilight, when

Each mole-hill thought swells to a huge Olympus,—

And which causes them to appear different to what they really are, being, nevertheless, real tangible objects: and this is within the experience of every one; and, indeed, is well illustrated in the extract from Bloomfield*, or the reference to Reginald Scott †: the “well-told anecdote by Dr. Ferrier ‡,” is also of the same description. These illusions, however, are as widely different from real spectral scenes, or apparitions, as opposing elements.

Phantasms are neither more nor less than the productions of that internal sense, whereby the ideas of things absent are pictured to the mental eye; or, more strictly speaking, they are fancies in essence as well as conception.

I would further observe, that material objects, being in their very essence totally different from spiritual nature, cannot be perceived but through the material organs of sensation §; and, consequently, every appearance not submissive to proof

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 363; omitted in the second edit.

† Ib. p. 111 first edit, or 156 second edit.

‡ Ib. p. 368 first edit. or 309 second edit.

§ “The mind,” says Dr. Good, “has no direct communication with external objects.”—Vide Book of Nature, vol. iii. p. 63.

from corporeal sensation, must necessarily be of a spiritual nature. Moreover, spirit cannot act upon matter but by, or through, the instrumentality of the material organs; but spirit can act upon spiritual nature, without the intervention of matter, unfettered by time or space; both of which are adjuncts of the material world: of this we have a sort of presumptive proof, in the very frequent idea of individuals arising in the mind of others, immediately previous to their personal appearance, which has even become proverbial; but much stronger evidence is adduced, in several well-known instances of mental communications,—or, if you please, appearances,—of persons to others at the very moment of dissolution; such as that of Lord Balcarras*, Ben Jonson†, and others. Instances have also been related of individuals who have had mental views of scenes unknown; which future experience has realized; and it may be, that space, like time, may have no tangible existence; or, at least, offer no real obstacle to the immediate and uninterrupted communication of mental influence. Thus, it is probably under this, or some similar impression, that Lavater has suggested that the imagination (mind) can operate on the minds of others, independent of matter or space.

* *Philosophy of Apparitions*, p. 168 first edit. or 231 second edit.

† *Ib.* 352 first edit. or 331 second edit.

CHAPTER II.

Distinction between Spirit and Matter.

..... a make
 Half mortal, half immortal; earthy part,
 And part ethereal. —YOUNG.

“ I SHALL begin this discussion,” says Dr. Ferrier, in commencing his *Essay towards a Theory of Apparitions*, “ by admitting as an undeniable fact, that the forms of dead, or absent persons have been seen, and their voices have been heard, by witnesses whose testimony is entitled to belief.”

Such phenomena are, by Dr. Hibbert, in his “ *Philosophy of Apparitions*,” ascribed wholly to a morbid state of our corporeal system, producing, in consequence, those appearances by “ past feelings renovated through the organs of sense.” Thus it is asserted, that, “ an apparition is, in a strict sense; a past feeling, renovated with a degree of vividness, equalling, or exceeding, an actual impression. If the renewed feeling should be one of vision, a form may arise perfectly complete; if of sound, a distinct conversation may be heard; or, if of touch, the impression may be no less complete. The

question then is, What illusions occur when there are no morbid causes of excitement operating*?"

"In this case," he continues, "no other mental impressions of a spectral nature are experienced, than such as may be corrected by a slight examination of the natural objects to which they owe their origin †:" that is to say, that they are mere optical illusions of material objects, and have really nothing to do with apparitions or supernatural appearances, properly so called; and as such, ought to be dismissed from a philosophical discussion of actually occurring phenomena. Thus we are left to the consideration of their morbid origin, and in opposition to the opinion, "that the objects of such illusions may be in perfect health," he even goes so far as to assert, without any reservation, that "no apparitions of profane history were ever seen under such circumstances; but that they have universally arisen from morbid causes ‡."

To support this opinion, it is, therefore, necessary that we be, at those times, under some morbid influence; and, consequently, more or less, the subject of disease; and also, that the appearance must have been either wholly, or in part, the object of some previous perception:—If, therefore, it should appear in any one instance, that the individual

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 362, first edit. or 305, second edit.

† Ib. p. 363, first edit. or p. 413, second edit.

‡ Ib. p. 105, first edit. or p. 150, second edit.

experiencing the spectral impression was at the time in good health; or that the apparition was such as had no previous state of existence in the memory, or mind; then, the hypothesis would be no longer tenable. If it be argued, that perfect health is, under such circumstances, incapable of proof, as the state of the system in which those objects are experienced, may be assumed to be morbid, and the very appearance of an apparition presumptive proof of disease;—it is sufficient to reply, that assumption is not proof, neither is the perception of an unusual appearance any argument for, or against, the healthy state of the recipient: and be it remembered, that the converse of the proposition must be proved in every instance, before the theory can be supported on tenable grounds.

Keeping this in mind as a test for future argument, let us now take a different, and rather more extended, view of the matter under consideration.

The spirit, or soul, sometimes termed mind,—which, however, properly signifies or expresses the aggregate qualities of the former,—being in its own essence, of a nature purely spiritual, is, while in this material world, clothed, as it were, by the corporeal frame; performing various functions through its instrumentality, receiving impressions by means of the organs of sensation, and, when in health, and uninterrupted or uninjured by accidental circum-

stances, may be considered as being in the full and perfect use of the faculties of the body. At the same time, however, it is so far under the influence of, and (if the expression may be allowed) imprisoned by the corporeal frame, its natural clothing, as to prevent the divesting itself of those earthly fetters; so as to admit of spiritual intercourse; or perceptions. But when, from some temporary cause, this material body is either wholly, as possibly may be the case in a trance, or partially, as in sleep, for an interval thrown aside*; being thus, in a manner, rendered, for the time, incapable of fettering the mind; then the spirit becomes, more or less, susceptible of spiritual intercourse, or impressions; until the causes which have thus left the soul at liberty to experience these perceptions, being no longer influential, the corporeal organism regains the ascendancy, and excludes the mind from all but material impressions.

It is observed, at page 263 †, of Dr. Hibbert's 'Philosophy of Apparitions,' that, "In the common state of watchfulness, ideas are supposed to be less vivid than sensations." This observation appears to be correct; and may be taken as an argument for, and, indeed, as a corroborating proof of the

* This seems to have been the idea of Addison, when he observes, that, "Dreams look like the relaxation and amusement of the soul when disencumbered of her machine."

† Second edit. 409.

justness of the preceding view of the subject; for, sensations being of material, and ideas of mental origin; it follows, that in a natural state of health, sensations will possess a preponderating influence: but when sensation is abated, or partially removed, then is the spirit more enabled to exert its own proper energies, and will, in the end, finally free itself from all earthly restraint. This may, perhaps, be thought open to some exceptions; as in the case of febrile complaints, when, according to the opinions of some medical men, in certain states of the disease, sensation is most acute when ideas generally appear to be most vivid. This, however, even if correct, is a superficial view of the case, and in appearance only; because, the fantastic reveries and deliriums of the brain in fever, are mere phantasies, properly so called; and totally and essentially different from spiritual communications.

From the preceding remarks, it no longer appears to be a *necessary* consequence of spectral impressions, that, the bodily frame *must* be in a morbid state; neither does it follow, that every spectral scene, idea, or apparition, is only some "past feeling renovated;" since it must be allowed, that there may be "scenes which the (material) eye hath not seen, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive;" but which may be the subject of spectral impressions.

CHAPTER III.

Supernatural Appearances, related in the 'Philosophy of Apparitions,' considered.

I would entreat these to distinguish between raillery and argument, and not believe that mirth ought to determine in so weighty a case. That they would not admit of principles of the utmost concern without examination, and take impiety upon content. That they would appeal from the buffoon and the mocker, to the impartial decision of right reason, and debate this matter with the gravity that becomes the importance of the subject.—*Preface to Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE'S Creation.*

IN the endeavour thoroughly to investigate these interesting mysteries, it may be requisite to notice more particularly, a few passages in this highly ingenious though unfounded theory, and then see if there may not be some more reasonable way to account for those well authenticated relations of supernatural appearances, which have occasionally attracted much serious notice. As for the major part of frivolous ghost stories, the abortive productions of superstition, or disease, they can be considered only as phantasies; the wild reveries of a bewildered brain, or the ravings of delirium; and,

as such, independently of much dubious evidence, unworthy of serious consideration.

Our existence, according to the theory of Dr. Hibbert, may be briefly stated as consisting of *sensations*, divided, however, into sensations present, and sensations past, but renovatéd, and termed ideas: the former governed by the action of outward objects upon the corporeal organs; the latter principally, if not altogether, regulated by the state of the sanguineous fluid, and the nerves; producing feelings pleasurable, or otherwise, as health or morbidic action prevails. Thus the inhaling of nitrous oxide produces vivid pleasurable ideas*, while the effects of febrile miasma are directly the reverse †. Add to which, consciousness, or identity, is made to depend upon the comparative vividness of sensations, and ideas; which latter, according to the theory, are only past sensations renovatéd ‡.

That this is a fair view of the hypothesis, will be

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 12 (a) first edit. or p. 64, second edit.

† Ib. p. 14, first edit. or p. 65, second edit.

‡ Ib. p. 231, first edit. or p. 320, second edit. "The notion of the present and of the past, as well as the proper identity of the mind, necessarily enters into our definition of *consciousness*;" see also Formula, p. 244, "when sensations and ideas are of the same degree of vividness, all notion of present and of past time must naturally cease, or, in other words, there can be no mental consciousness of our feelings," or second edit. p. 1.

(a) This assertion it may, however, be requisite to notice, is subject to some exceptions.

best proved, by reverting to such parts of the work as tend to confirm the position. Thus, it is said, that,—mental states consist of “sensations and ideas, or, more correctly, renovated feelings* ;”—that, “sensations are states of the mind induced by objects actually present, and acting upon the organs of sense † ;”—that, “organs of sense are the actual medium through which past feelings are renovated ‡ ;”—that intensity of ideas, “is induced by an absolute affection of those particular parts of the organic tissue on which sensations depend § ;”—that, “the susceptibility of the mind to sensations and ideas, ought to refer to similar circumstances of corporeal structure || ;”—that, “sensations and ideas depend upon similar circumstances of organic structure ¶ .” &c.

But, is it not more accordant to the experience of our own inward feelings ; is it not more consonant to sound reason ; is it not more in unison with the voice of revelation ; to say, that our existence is of a compound nature ? That is, of a nature partaking of both spiritual and material powers : consisting of sensations, as concerns the body ; and ideas, or mental states, as respects the soul ; the former depending wholly on the agency.

* Philosophy of Apparitions, pp. 15 and 180, first edit. or p. 66, second edit.

† Ib. p. 179, first edit. or p. 244, second edit.

‡ Ib. p. 288, first edit. or p. 246, second edit.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid.

¶ Ib. p. 296, first edit.

of our corporeal organs, the latter on the mind, or spirit, which, while in connexion with the other, is submissive to the effects of sensations from material objects; but, nevertheless, capable of mental enjoyment and spiritual communication?

The subject of identity may be deferred till some of those supernatural appearances, generally allowed to be well authenticated, and from time to time frequently noticed by various authorities, have been examined; of these, the very singular circumstance alluded to in the note at foot of page 166*, of Dr. Hibbert's *Philosophy of Apparitions*, may well demand our serious attention.

It is well known that the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, in his *History of the Civil Wars*, relates a very remarkable appearance, preceding the assassination of the Duke of Buckingham, in the year 1628, during the reign of Charles the First. The account, as given by the noble historian, is so plainly narrated, and wears so much the garb of an "unvarnished tale," that it is but justice to transcribe it literally as found in the original work, printed at Oxford, A. D. 1707.

"There were many Stories scatter'd abroad at that time, of several Prophecies, and Predictions of the Duke's untimely and violent Death. Amongst

* Second edit. 222.

the rest there was one, which was upon a better foundation of credit, than usually such discourses are founded upon. There was an Officer in the King's Wardrobe* in *Windsor* Castle, of a good reputation for honesty and discretion, and then about the Age of fifty years or more; this man had, in his youth, been bred in a School in the Parish where Sir *George Villiers*, the Father of the Duke liv'd; and had been much cherished and obliged, in that season of his Age, by the said Sir *George*, whom afterwards he never saw. About six months before the miserable end of the Duke of *Buckingham*, about midnight, this Man, being in his bed, at *Windsor*, where his office was, and in a very good health, there appear'd to him on the side of his bed, a Man of a very venerable aspect, who drew the curtains of his bed, and fixing his Eyes upon him ask'd him, if he knew him. The poor Man, half dead with fear and apprehension, being ask'd the second time, Whether he remember'd him? and having at that time call'd to his memory the presence of Sir *George Villiers*, and the very Clothes he used to wear, in which, at that time, he seem'd to be habited, he answered him, that he thought him to be that Person. He reply'd, ' he was in the right; that he was the same, and that he expected a service from him; which was, that he

* Said to have been a Mr. Nicholas Towse.

should go from him to his son the Duke of *Buckingham*, and tell him, if he did not somewhat to ingratiate himself to the People, or, at least, to abate the extreme Malice they had against him, he would be suffered to live but a short time.' After this discourse he disappeared; and the poor Man, if he had been at all waking, slept very well till morning, when he believ'd all this to be a dream, and considered it no otherwise.

“ The next night, or shortly after, the same Person appear'd to him again in the same place, and about the same time of the night, with an aspect a little more severe than before; and ask'd him, Whether he had done as he required him? And perceiving he had not, gave him very severe reprehensions; told him, ‘ He expected more compliance from him; and that if he did not perform his commands, he should enjoy no peace of mind, but should always be pursued by him: upon which he promised him to obey him. But the next morning waking out of a good sleep, though he was exceedingly perplex'd with the lively representation of all particulars to his memory, he was willing still to persuade himself that he had only dream'd; and consider'd that he was a Person at such a distance from the Duke, that he knew not how to find any admission to his presence; much less had any hope to be believ'd in what he should

Say. So with great trouble and unquietness, he spent some time in thinking what he should do; and in the end resolved to do nothing in the matter.

“ The same person appear'd to him the third time with a terrible countenance, and bitterly reproaching him for not performing what he had promised to do. The poor Man had by this time recover'd the Courage to tell him, ‘ That in truth he had deferr'd the execution of his Commands, upon considering how difficult a thing it would be for him to get any access to the Duke, having acquaintance with no Person about him; and if he could obtain admission to him, he should never be able to persuade him, that he was sent in such a manner; but he should, at best, be thought to be Mad, or to be set on and employ'd by his own, or the Malice of other Men, to abuse the Duke; and so he should be sure to be undone. The Person repli'd, as he had done before, ‘ That he should never find rest, till he should perform what he required, and, therefore, he were better to dispatch it: That the access to his Son was known to be very easy; and that few Men waited long for Him; and for the gaining him Credit, he would tell him two or three particulars; which he charged him never to mention to any Person living, but to the Duke himself, and he should no sooner hear them,

but he would believe all the rest he should say: and so repeating his Threats he left him.

“ In the Morning, the poor Man more confirm'd by the last Appearance, made his Journey to *London*, where the Court then was. He was very well known to Sir *Ralph Freeman*, one of the Masters of Requests; who had Married a Lady that was nearly ally'd to the Duke, and was himself well receiv'd by him. To him this Man went; and though he did not acquaint him with all particulars, he said enough to him to let him see there was something extraordinary in it; and the knowledge he had of the Sobriety, and Discretion of the Man, made the more impression on him. He desired that by His means he might be brought to the Duke; to such a place and in such a manner as should be thought fit: affirming, That he had much to say to him, and of such a Nature, as would require much Privacy, and some time and patience in the hearing. Sir *Ralph* promised He would speak first with the Duke of him, and then he should understand his pleasure: and, accordingly, in the first opportunity, he did inform him of the Reputation and Honesty of the Man, and then what he desired, and of all he knew of the Matter. The Duke, according to his usual openness and condescension, told him, ‘ That he was the next

day early to Hunt with the King ; that his Horses should attend him at *Lambeth*-Bridge where he would Land by five of the Clock in the morning ; and if the Man attended him there at that hour, he would walk, and speak with him, as long as should be necessary. Sir *Ralph* carried the Man with him the next morning, and presented him to the Duke at his Landing, who receiv'd him Courteously, and walk'd aside in conference near an hour, none but his own Servants being at that hour in that place ; and they and Sir *Ralph* at such a distance, that they could not hear a word, though the Duke sometimes spoke, and with great commotion ; which Sir *Ralph* the more easily observ'd and perceiv'd, because he kept his Eyes always fixed upon the Duke ; having procur'd the conference, upon somewhat he knew there was of Extraordinary. And the Man told him in his return over the water, ' That when he mentioned those particulars which were to gain him credit, the Substance whereof he said he darst not impart to him, the Duke's colour chang'd, and he swore he could come to that knowledge only by the Devil ; for that those particulars were known only to himself, and to one Person more, who he was sure, would never speak of it.'

“ The Duke pursued his purpose of Hunting ; but was observ'd to ride all the morning with great

pensiveness, and in deep thought, without any delight in the Exercise he was upon: and, before the Morning was spent, left the Field, and alighted at his Mother's Lodging in *White-Hall*; with whom he was shut up for the space of two or three hours; the noise of their discourse frequently reaching the Ears of those who attended in the next Rooms; and when the Duke left Her, his Countenance appear'd full of trouble, with a mixture of anger; a Countenance, that was never before observ'd in him, in any Conversation with Her, towards whom he had a profound reverence. And the Countess herself (for though she was Married to a private Gentleman Sir *Thomas Compton*, she had been created Countess of *Buckingham* shortly after her son had first assumed that Title) was, at the Duke's leaving her, found overwhelm'd in Tears, and in the Highest Agony imaginable. Whatever there was of all this, it is a notorious truth, that when the news of the Duke's Murther (which Happen'd within a few Month's after*) was brought to his Mother, she seem'd not in the least degree surpris'd; but receiv'd it as if she had forseen it; nor did afterwards express such a degree of sorrow, as was expected from such a Mother, for the loss of such a Son."

* The Duke was assassinated at Portsmouth, on the 23rd August, 1628, by Lieut. John Felton, at the premature age of 35 years.

The Duke, it may be observed, though generally affable and of a courteous demeanour, was of an overbearing, rash, and impetuous disposition, and a slave to his passions; and, as such, it may be presumed, not very strict in his morals and private conduct: the warning, therefore, from the apparition, if such it was, may be considered as having relation to his private character, as well as public conduct. Rapin tells us that, "nothing could tempt him to quit a dissolute life. He gloried in having no religion, and was reckoned a downright Atheist." Hume asserts, that, "Of every talent of a minister he was utterly devoid." "The whole power of the kingdom was grasped by his insatiable hand." "He scrupled not," says Smollet, "to sacrifice the interest of the nation to his own private views of resentment." And Mrs. Macauley observes, that he was by "his pestilent intrigues, the chief cause of that distress which the French Protestants at that time laboured under." The interference of supernatural warning cannot, therefore, in this instance, be affirmed to be on frivolous grounds; and with regard to the credit due to the narration, the opinion of Dr. Lant Carpenter on the truth of testimony, may be here quoted as a sufficient authority for its insertion. "The two essential conditions," says this intelligent writer, "for the truth of testimony are, first, that the witnesses be

competent, have had adequate abilities and opportunities for obtaining accurate information. Secondly, that they have no intention to deceive others."

It is worthy of remark, that to account for these and other appearances,—which, from the credibility of their evidence, and the important circumstances belonging to them, appear more peculiarly to demand attention,—the author of the 'Philosophy of Apparitions' makes no attempt—unless the futile one of "fortuitous coincidences" may be so considered—confining the support of his arguments to the ravings of delirium, the phantasies of disease, and the unsupported tales of credulous superstition. In the foregoing instance, all that is brought forward to discredit the relation, are some extracts from Grose, which treat the subject generally, and with a degree of levity unbecoming a serious discussion; and some observations in a note, extracted from a recent history of the British Empire, by George Brodie, Esq., commenting on the relation of Clarendon as follows:—

"This noble historian," says Mr. Brodie, "interrupts his narrative with a long story about the ghost of Sir George Villiers, the Duke's father, having given a warning of his son's fate no seldomer than three times. Like ghosts in general, this was a very silly one; for, instead of going directly to his

son, (was the spirit under the same sycophantish awe with the living followers of the duke?) the phantom carried its errand to an officer of the wardrobe, whom in life it had paid attention to at school, but whose situation was too mean to warrant his going directly with the important intelligence to the favourite. The man neglected the warning till the third time, and then he went to a gentleman to whom he was well known, Sir Ralph Freeman, one of the Masters of the Requests, who had married a lady nearly allied to the Duke, and prevailed with him to apply to his Grace to grant the officer of the wardrobe an opportunity of speaking with him privately, on a subject of the utmost consequence to his Grace. The man gave sufficient information, which he had got from the ghost, relative to Buckingham's private affairs, to satisfy the Duke that he was no impostor, and the Duke was observed to be very melancholy afterwards. But to what all this warning tended, except to create uneasiness at some impending calamity, it is impossible to conceive, since the hint was too dark and mysterious to enable him to provide against the danger?"*

Now, does Mr. Brodie—(and Dr. Hibbert in giving this extract)—believe the relation, as recited by Clarendon? or, are they endeavouring to dis-

* Phil. Ap. p. 166, or 222 second edit.

credit it by enveloping it in a veil of ridicule, which may be pretty certainly considered as indicative of weakness in argument*? It may not be irrelevant to devote a short space to an investigation of the circumstances, as given by the noble historian; who, taking the weakest side of the argument, cannot be suspected of recording particulars otherwise than as given to him, on the authorities of individuals concerned in transactions of sufficient notoriety to warrant him in doing so.

In the preceding relation, it is to be noticed, that the individual to whom the apparition appeared, was "of a good reputation for honesty, sobriety, and discretion," that he was "in a very good health," that on the first appearance he himself "believed all this to be a dream, and considered it so;" and on the second, though now more strongly impressed, as to various circumstances, yet, "he was willing still to persuade himself that he had only dreamed;" while in con-

* "HORACE once happened to say, with an air of levity, that ridicule was more efficacious in deciding disputes of importance than all the severity of argument. Shaftesbury caught the idea, improved upon it, and advanced the doctrine, that ridicule is the test of truth. All those who possessed one characteristic of man in great perfection, RISIBILITY, but who were slenderly furnished with the other, RATIONALITY, adopted the opinion with eagerness; for though to reason was difficult, to laugh was easy."—KNOX'S ESSAYS, vol. i. No. 41.

"Reject th' inverted rule,

That truth is e'er explor'd by ridicule;

On truth, on falsehood, let her colours fall,

She throws a dazzling glare alike on all."—POPE.

"Those surely are Lilliputians in Philosophy who consider ridicule as the test of truth."—SWIFT.

sidering the relative difference of rank and station between himself and the well-known favourite of the king, he, "in the end, resolved to do nothing in the matter;" but, at the third appearance, being still wavering and unwilling, the apparition gave him some information (never since divulged) which evidently was the means of procuring him, not only access to the Duke, but a full credence for the truth of his mission; this is undeniably established by the personal observations of Sir Ralph Freeman at the meeting, and by his Grace's subsequent conduct, and other attending circumstances.

If, according to Dr. Hibbert, these are to be considered as only "fortuitous coincidences," to what cause can the secrets disclosed by the apparition be attributed? Not to a morbid state in the individual, for he was "in a very good health;"—not to a renovation of past feelings, for from whence could he have had any previous idea of that, which the noble Duke himself affirmed, could only come by the Devil, (meaning, of course, some supernatural communicant,) and known only to his Grace, and one other person; which other person, conjecture, founded on the subsequent interview, has supposed to be his mother.

Mr. Brodie observes, that the ghost was very silly in not going directly to the Duke; and asks,

satirically, if not irreverently, whether it was from sycophantic awe of his Grace?

I will state a possible reason for this apparent inconsistency. The noble Duke, placed on the summit of power and wealth, the favourite of his Sovereign, uncontroled by aught of earthly mould, and in the full enjoyment of all that might gratify the passions, was not more likely than the lowly officer of the wardrobe to have supposed such an appearance other than a dream; and even had the apparition disclosed to the Duke circumstances unknown to others, his Grace might—most probably would—have treated them as the reveries of a disturbed imagination, as past feelings renovating. But when another, an humble and uninterested individual, comes forward, and confidently asserts that something,—term it by whatever name you may,—having the appearance of the father of the Duke, has sent a message, and for credence, discloses such secret facts as make it apparent (and it had that effect) that his relation is true; then is it more likely to gain a serious attention than even the evidence of our own senses.

But Mr. Brodie further demands, (and in this instance he may be identified with Dr. Hibbert,) “to what all this warning tended, except to create uneasiness at some impending calamity, since the

hint was too dark and mysterious to enable him (the Duke) to provide against the danger?" I will venture to suggest to what I think the warning might have tended. It might have tended to a reformation in the Duke's conduct, and, as a very probable consequence, to averting thereby that untimely fate, which, but for such reformation, it was, it may be presumed, the design of a controlling Providence, for some wise ends, to inflict. The information was not,—nor are we justified in supposing it ought to have been,—a warning of a specific danger, to be avoided by any *human foresight*, but was,—referring, it may be, to his moral as well as to his political conduct,—simply, "repent and live." He did not repent, nor would "be persuaded though one rose from the dead." The feeling, though powerful at the time, was too evanescent to withstand the allurements of life; and who shall presume to say—looking only to the history of this country at that turbulent period—whether it was not for the most important purposes that, *seeing he would not reform, he should no longer guide the helm of political affairs*, independent of the less momentous concerns of private life.

It has been judiciously remarked, in speaking of apparitions, that, "to reject all such appearances as fabulous, is too severe a reflection upon the

credit of the best historians*." And it is very obvious, that Dr. Hibbert has erred in not sufficiently discriminating between the more serious and well authenticated relations, and the many frivolous unsupported tales which he elsewhere very properly terms the devices of rank impostors; and which may well be supposed current on all subjects of such general notice. It is this, no doubt, which must have led him to condemn the sentiments of Theophilus Insulanus, and, in the same page †, assert that Grose has "but too successfully ridiculed" these relations.

But what says Theophilus Insulanus, who, though an anonymous writer, should be allowed due credit for just sentiments, however we may be induced to doubt his evidence. He observes, with a seriousness due to the subject, that "such ghostly visitants are not employed on an errand of a frivolous concern to lead us into error, but are employed as so many heralds by the Great Creator, for the more ample demonstration of his power, to proclaim tidings for our instruction; and, as we are prone to despond in religious matters, to confirm our faith of the existence of spirits, (the foundation of all religion,) and the dignity of human nature."

* Wanley.

† Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 163, first edit., or 220, second edit.

And what has Grose? Assuredly, little in the way of argument, but abundant endeavours to “successfully ridicule” the subject; talking of churchyard ghosts, which, he says, “have no particular business, but seem to appear, *pro bono publico*, or to scare drunken rustics from tumbling over their graves,”—“that ghosts do not go about their business like persons of this world. In cases of murder, a ghost, instead of going to the next justice of the peace and laying its information, or to the nearest relation of the person murdered, appears to some poor labourer who knows none of the parties; draws the curtain of some decrepit nurse, or almswoman; or hovers about the place where his body is deposited.” Proceeding in this strain of irony and scepticism, he concludes by observing, in the same spirit of (*un*) *successful ridicule*, “But it is presumptuous to scrutinize far into these matters; ghosts have undoubtedly forms and customs peculiar to themselves.”

It is presumptuous to treat any subject, that may possibly be serious, in this way: nor is Dr. Hibbert more happy in his expressions, when he talks of ghosts haunting a house “for no other purpose than to kick up a row in it—to knock about chairs, tables, or other furniture;” and introduces unfounded and ridiculous stories, evidently the offspring of superstition or fraud, enlarged in

their transit, together with quotations from old dramas*, against which, in the way of argument, a feather would "make the balance kick the beam."

What would be said of that judge or jury who should reject all credible evidence, merely from its having been unavoidably mixt up with frivolous and improbable relations, sought out and selected for the purpose of throwing an air of successful ridicule over the whole? We could not, certainly, award them much credit for sound judgment, or candid investigation; an evident bias would be but too apparent.

It may be readily conceded, without affecting the general argument, that "ghosts are more frequently seen or heard than absolutely felt;" and that "false impressions of vision are decidedly more numerous than those of any other faculty †;" for what have optical delusions,—such as seeing through some uncertain medium material objects other than they really are,—to do with spiritual perceptions of the mind? And to meet the previous observation, it may be not inaptly remarked, that if apparitions of the departed are permitted occasionally to revisit this earth, it is evidently the sight and hearing, or some mental perceptions

* Philosophy of Apparitions, pp. 164, 206, 299, first edit., or pp. 221, 198, 355, second edit.

† Ib. pp. 197, 198, first edit., or p. 255, second edit.

analogous thereto, which are most likely to be the conceptive medium. As to known impositions, they are all unworthy notice; and, indeed, irrelevant in a work of this nature, especially when accompanied by the hacknied pun of having "laid him (the ghost) pretty effectually, by flinging him out of the window*."

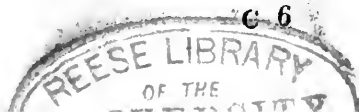
Granville relates, says Dr. Hibbert, and the relation is inserted here as he gives it †, that "a man, upon the alleged information of a female spirit, who came by her death foully, led the officers of justice to the pit where a mangled corpse was concealed, charged *two* individuals with her murder; and, upon the strength of this fictitious story, the poor fellows were condemned and executed, although they solemnly persevered to the last in maintaining their innocence. It is," he concludes, "but too evident, in this case, by whom the atrocious deed had been committed."

It is not attempted to contradict this relation ‡; the circumstances may therefore be taken as they stand; for it will be found that Dr. Hibbert, in this instance, (probably despairing to account for them by his novel theory,) has recourse to the one only

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 204, first edit., or 256, second edit.

† Ib. p. 167, first edit., or 223, second edit.

‡ "Granville has adduced," says Heber, in his 'Life of Taylor,' "some evidences of apparitions which it is easier to ridicule than to disprove."



remaining expedient, namely, that of *accusing* the living evidence of inventing a story of an apparition, whereby he might conceal his own delinquency as the actual murderer, by the sacrifice of *two more* innocent individuals! If, however, this were disproved, it must be then allowed that the appearance, in this case, was probably something more than a "past feeling renovated."

Experience is not wanting, (and that, indeed, very recently) to justify the belief that criminals,—and the more atrocious the more probable,—may have denied, even to the very latest moment, their guilt, though incontrovertibly proved and satisfactorily confirmed by after evidence*. It is, therefore, at least, as probable that the two persons executed should be the offenders, as that the other, with the weight of crime on his mind, should attempt the hazardous expedient of establishing proof of guilt against two, when one would have as effectually served his purpose.

* The case of the two M'Keands is here alluded to, as an instance of unyielding obduracy, it is to be hoped but rarely practised. Michael, one of these atrocious culprits, most obstinately and repeatedly persisted in asseverations of innocence, even to the very last; though the other, Alexander, had acknowledged their guilt; and, when informed of the steady denial of his brother, is said to have exclaimed, "Oh, God forgive him! he is guilty, and well he knows it. It was he who stabbed Mrs. Blears below, while I murdered the woman above." This confession was corroborative of, though scarcely wanting to confirm, the evidence of Mrs. Blears, who almost miraculously recovered; and of the strongest circumstantial proof of one of the most horrible and ferocious details on record.

There are many other self-evident objections to the probability of this accusation of false evidence being well founded. There is the probability that the body, once concealed, might remain undiscovered till a favourable opportunity for the escape of the delinquent,—there was the evident hazard of premature discovery, coupled with the almost certain risk of uncorroborative evidence,—there was the chance of one or both proving an alibi; highly probable, in a recent transaction, to be the means of elucidating the actual facts,—there is the total absence of evidence, or even suspicion, against the accuser, which, had any existed, would of course have been brought forward on the trial,—there were the various chances of circumstantial evidence, or corroborative proof of innocence or guilt on both sides. Moreover, the discovery of the body presupposes it a recent transaction, and much strengthens these objections; which are also further supported by no subsequent discoveries ever having been brought forward, tending to the identifying the murderer, which, in all such cases, seems almost invariably the result.

It is therefore certain, that this (supposed) evident culprit did accuse two persons, when one would have better answered the end he had in view,—that he incurred unnecessary hazard in courting a premature investigation, when time

might have favoured his escape,—that there was no evidence, or even suspicion against him,—that the two individuals accused, could not bring any satisfactory proof of their innocence, but that there was a singular want of circumstantial evidence in their favour,—that nothing has since transpired to invalidate the original statement,—to all which may be added, the probability that, even in the darkest days of superstition, character would ever have a preponderating influence; and, taking these several circumstances into due reflection, it appears extremely difficult to conceive on what grounds, other than a determination to discredit all supernatural appearances, the disbelief of an apparition in the preceding case can be maintained: allowing the appearance possible, the conclusion is clear; while a sceptical objection involves the whole in a mass of conjectural improbabilities, to say nothing of the controlling hand of Providence in the affairs of humanity.

And why is it so “evident in this case by whom the atrocious deed had been committed?” Because the culprits persisted in denying their guilt! which is saying, that it is less probable that an atrocious murderer should deny his crimes, under a probable hope of pardon, than that the evidence (supposing him to be the criminal) should add to his crimes the further enormity of sacrificing,

unnecessarily, two more individuals, under a less probable hope of safety.

There are many other relations which might be here introduced with great propriety, but, at present, these observations will be more immediately confined to those mentioned by Dr. Hibbert himself, as illustrative of the arguments in support of his theory; reserving, however, the opportunity of reverting to some few of these singularly mysterious appearances, in a subsequent portion of the present work.

In accordance with this arrangement, it must be noticed, in the first place, that he allows there are cases which are not so easy to explain; by which are evidently meant, those wherein the spirit of a departed friend has appeared to some distant individual at the period of its leaving its earthly tenement. That these have actually taken place, Dr. Hibbert does not deny, but accounts for such striking phenomena, by supposing them "fortuitous coincidences" of "past feelings renovated," and dependent on the doctrine of chances. It is not, therefore, necessary to touch upon them further, than by observing, that it is not the first instance by many, wherein a sceptical disposition has "strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel;" verifying the very appropriate remark of Dr. Milligan, that "it is possible to transfer credulity from

one extreme to the other; to yield a faith as implicit to the probabilities of the scientific physiologist, as is usually required for the dogmas of pneumatology." It may be said that a supernatural appearance is a miracle—I grant that it is; but not more so than every process of animated nature, and thought so only from its unfrequency, while all around is one vast system of miracles in never ceasing performance.

"Men," says an elegant writer of our day*, "lived and breathed in electrical fluidity many thousand years, without being in any way conscious of its existence. This circumstance alone ought to be sufficient to place men on their guard, how they glide into atheism, when anything is seen, or any event occurs, of which they have no power to discover the immediate cause."

"We cannot," says the same author †, "conceive what is infinitely great, nor what is infinitely small; and yet Atheists will, in solemn complacency, contemplate their own wisdom; and though they will acknowledge that serpents may exist in the centre of large trees, and toads in the bosom of flints, yet, because they cannot penetrate a few secrets of the material world, they will not stoop

* *Vide* Bucke on the Beauties, Harmonies, and Sublimities of Nature, vol. i. p. 359.

† *Ib.* vol. iv. p. 319.

to the belief, that there are more honourable secrets than they are themselves masters of."

"I think," said a certain sceptical Philosopher, "therefore I am*." The bearing of which is, that nothing is to be believed without the test of our own individual and personal experience; and this would lead to the conclusion, that a future existence must be experienced before it can be credited. The futility of such argument requires no comment; the verity of our existence hereafter is demonstrable, and will not be denied. And if we believe in a future state, we must believe that our spiritual nature will exist therein; whence, then, the difficulty in conceiving that a spirit departed may have the power,—however rarely permitted to use it,—of communicating with one which hath not yet thrown off "this mortal coil?" Thus, as here on earth, in our maturer years and advance to old age, we gradually lose sight of the cares of infancy, though still remembered with a full consciousness of their previous existence; so, perhaps, in an hereafter, we may retain an evanescent feeling of affection, a mental thought for those we leave behind, till all on earth we value shall

* Des Cartes—an argument of about equal weight with that of a sceptical character, who, in conversation, observed, "that as he never had died, he could not be certain that he ever should!"

have joined the spiritual throng; when wholly weaned from earthly recollections, we become no longer anxious, though probably ever conscious of their pre-existence. And is there actually anything in reason, or in revelation, which proves that we should err in supposing that the mind, freed as it may be presumed to be, at the period of the dissolution of the body from the corporeal shackles which have bound it into space, may, when thus released, take a parting leave of some object of peculiarly strong regard? Dr. Hibbert candidly acknowledges, that there are many apparitions, which are in every respect worthy of some such explanation.

Where, then, is the over credulity required to believe the appearance of the Viscount Dundee to Lord Balcarras,—of the Lady of Sir Charles Lee to their daughter,—of the President of the Royal Society of Berlin,—Maupertius? of whom the author of the ‘Philosophy of Apparitions’ observes, “But it appears that this ghost was seen by a philosopher, and, consequently, no attempt was made to connect it with superstitious speculations*.” the one very argument in favour of its actual occurrence. The philosopher, being scept-

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 174, first edit., or p. 231, second edit.

tical on the subject, took no further notice of the circumstance; that there was the appearance is allowed, but not accounted for*.

The case of Colonel Gardner demands a more particular notice; for what is Dr. Hibbert's pointed remark?—that “no single narrative has, perhaps, done more to confirm the superstitious opinion, that apparitions of this awful kind cannot arise without a divine fiat †.”

That apparitions have arisen, will, even in this day, scarcely be denied; whether they arise with or without a divine fiat, is another question. But what says the eminently pious Dr. Doddridge, as introductory to the relation, for the truth of which he vouches in the most solemn manner; “much more solemn,” says Dr. Hibbert, “than the occasion required.” This can hardly be, if we believe the narrative; though the expression forms a kind of fulfilment of the prophetic way in which Dr. Doddridge seems to expect his account to be received.

“I choose,” says Dr. Doddridge, “deliberately to expose myself to those severe censures, which the haughty but empty scorn of infidelity, or principles nearly approaching it, and effectually doing

* It may be appropriate to notice, that Maupertius abandoned his sceptical opinions before he died.

† Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 192, first edit., or 226, second edit.

its pernicious work, may very probably dictate upon the occasion, rather than to smother a relation, which may, in the judgment of my conscience, be likely to conduce so much to the glory of God, the honour of the Gospel, and the good of mankind." Colonel Gardner, as is well known, was, while in the pursuit of a criminal assignation with a married woman, arrested in the progress of it by a visionary appearance, and converted "from the evil of his ways;" a change which was not for a time only, for the impression was lasting, and its effects perceptible in his subsequent conduct through life.

"With regard to this vision," says Dr. Hibbert, "it can be considered in no other light, than as so many recollected images of the mind, which, *probably*, had their origin in the language of *some* urgent appeal to repentance, that the Colonel *might* have *casually* read, *or* heard delivered;" and he hints at some *possible* injury of the brain, "pre-disposing him to this spectral illusion," but strenuously condemns the idea entertained by the pious Doddridge, of considering it as a special interposition of heaven.

I am not, I trust, by any means inclined to enter on the subject in the spirit of criticism; but it may be permitted to notice the very evident subterfuge displayed in this commentary on the relation, in order to discredit it, in support of a favourite theory.

The narration of Colonel Gardner must, it would seem, be in some way counteracted; and no better, or more probable, idea offers, than the very feeble and suppositious case, that he (Colonel Gardner) *might* have *casually* read, or heard at *some time*, *something* which *probably might* then be, “as so many *recollected* images of the mind:” or, if this view of the subject is unavailable, that his brain *might* have been injured by a fall from his horse at *some time or other*, which *might possibly* have *casually* produced the effect as related. Surely such feeble resources are too trivial to call for further comment.

But Dr. Hibbert, in furtherance of his argument or opinion, adduces the circumstance of Lord Herbert's solemn appeal to heaven, previous to publishing his *De Veritate*, a deistical work, the apparent sanction to which, Dr. Hibbert considers as “completely neutralizing” the inference drawn from Colonel Gardner's narration. Here with great propriety it might be very reasonably inquired, whether the ultimate effect of Lord Herbert's work, in leading to a full investigation of the arguments there brought forward, and their consequent refutation, may not justify the apparent and very dubious sanction,—if indeed it deserves that name,—said to have been experienced by his lordship, on that somewhat presumptuous appeal?

Before, however, this “completely neutralizing” inference can be admitted, it ought to be impartially examined on what grounds the argument is upheld. How Dr. Hibbert, who calls Lord Herbert’s a vision,—than which nothing surely can be more dissimilar,—can explain this, as “completely neutralizing” the narration as given by the learned and pious Doddridge, is somewhat inexplicable; since, in order to support such a position, not only should the attendant circumstances and subsequent effects be of a similar complexion and import, but the evidence on which they rest, the testimony, should also be of corresponding value, before an equal degree of credit can be accorded. For the present, therefore, putting out of the scale all particulars of the two narratives, and their immediate and subsequent effects, let us look to the character of the two distinguished authors upon whose testimony the credibility of the details depends.

On the one hand, we find a divine, of whom it is unnecessary to say what he was, as every one versed in theological reading must be aware of his sincerity and piety; but this we may safely aver, that he was no vain-glorious boaster; no fanatical enthusiast; no frivolous hunter after novelties; no deceitful follower of a religion he only outwardly professed; no pedantic pretender to knowledge of which he was incapable of appreciating the value; no crafty

and subtle writer on subjects in which gross partiality and profound ignorance were self-evident: he was none of these; but Lord Herbert was all this, superadded to a consummate, unpardonable, and childish vanity, inherent from his cradle to his grave!

Can it be requisite to ask, which is the preponderating evidence?

That this is not an overcharged view of the character of Lord Herbert, it is only necessary to refer to a late author, of too high standing to admit a doubt of its justness and verity. From a recent *History of Chivalry* * are subjoined some extracts, which indubitably prove the value of this inconsistent trifler, whose reveries and opinions are now brought forward, as “completely neutralizing” the inferences drawn by one of the most devout and learned divines of the last century.

Edward, afterwards Lord Herbert of Cherbury, born at Eaton in Shropshire, in the year 1581, was of a loyal and respectable family, though the foundation of their wealth arose from “plunder in the wars in the north, and forfeited estates of the rebels,” in the time of Edward VI. and Queen Mary. “The valour of the Herberts,” says Mills, “rivalled that of the romantic heroes of chivalry;”

* By Charles Mills, Esq., vol. ii. p. 138 and sequel.

but, “the courage which had been formerly displayed in the battle-field was, as times degenerated, reserved for private wrongs; and the patriot sank into the duellist. At the close of his life, Edward recollected with pleasure that one of his brothers had carried with him to the grave the scars of twenty-four wounds, many of them the results of private brawls.” If we are to give credit to his auto-biography, his earliest years were marked by a precocious wisdom, and attainments, rarely, if indeed ever, witnessed; and many years spent at the courts of England and France, probably tended to foster an inherent vanity and self-esteem, so evidently exhibited in his character and writings. At these times, he was “more frequently busied in private brawls (but his challenges never ripened into duels) than engaged in philosophical meditation:” nor did his premature attainments produce much valuable fruit; unbounded vanity, frivolity, and unceasing anxiety for public notice, were the evident motives of his conduct. “He went to Florence, and was more pleased with a nail which was at one end iron and the other gold, than by all the glories of painting and sculpture with which the Etrurian Athens was then fresh and redolent. He sojourned for some time at Rome, but hastily left the city when the pope was about to bless him. This refusal of an old man’s benediction proceeded

from the vanity of his character.”—“ A decorous submission to the usages of Rome would not have gained him the world’s talk, and, therefore, he hastily quitted the consistory when the blessing was about to be given, knowing that such a bold act of contempt on the religion of the place would be bruited every where.” This could not arise from any respect to religious feeling, for he was perfectly indifferent to Christianity; and a greater contempt for every such motive could scarcely be evinced than when, in 1616, he was sent as ambassador to France. “ Previously to his setting off, he engaged to fight a duel, though the day fixed for the circumstance was Sunday; but, when he arrived at Paris on a Saturday night, he refused to accept an invitation of the Spanish ambassador for an interview the next morning, because Sunday was a day which he alleged he wholly gave to devotion. The spirit of duelling was far more powerful in his mind than the love of conformity to religious decencies; but it cost him nothing, indeed it only aggrandized his importance to decline the visit of the Spanish ambassador on a Sunday.” Besides his *De Veritate, prout distinguitur à revelatione verisimili, possibili et à falso*, “ he published another Latin work, in support of the cause of infidelity, and then gave to the world his ‘ History of the Reign of Henry VIII.,’ a book which has been always characterised, by

writers who have never read a line of it, as a master-piece of historic biography; and if gross partiality for his hero, profound ignorance of human nature, imperfect acquaintance with his subject, and a pedantic style, constitute the excellence of memoir writing, Lord Herbert is an author of the first class."

"Such," continues the same author, "was Lord Herbert of Cherbury. His life may be placed in opposition to, rather than in harmony with, the heroes of early chivalric times. He had their courage, it is true, but he had none of their dignity and nobleness, none of their manly grace; and there was a fantastic trifling in his conduct, which their elevated natures would have scorned. He was no Christian knight: the superstition of the Chandos's and Manny's, gross as it was, is not so offensive to the moral sense as the craft and subtlety of Lord Cherbury's intellect, which refined Christianity into Deism. We can admire the heroes of the days of Edward III., placing their swords' points on the gospels, and vowing to defend the truth to the utterance; but how absurd was the fanaticism, and contemptible the vanity, of him who expected that heaven would declare its will that he should deliver to the world the vain chimeras of his imagination!"

Notwithstanding Dr. Leland's remarks in his

‘View of Deistical Writers,’ introduced into the ‘Philosophy of Apparitions’ for the purpose of supporting the truth of Lord Herbert’s statement of his supposed revelation or permission from heaven to print his deistical compositions; it may, perhaps, be a question with many, whether, from the character of the man, his lordship is really entitled to that degree of credit which is there awarded him: for, says Dr. Johnson, “Sceptical writers are vain men, and will gratify themselves at any expense. Truth will not afford sufficient food to their vanity, so they have betaken themselves to error.”

“Hateful error, melancholy’s child,

“Why dost thou shew to the apt thoughts of men

“The things that are not?”

SHAKESPEARE.

CHAPTER IV.

Guardian Spirits.

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.

MILTON'S *Paradise Lost.*

THIS idea of Milton is not a mere poetic fiction, but allowed as orthodox by some of our best informed divines, who have even made it the theme of their discourse from the pulpit. It is in accordance with our religious tenets, and certainly not contrary to sound natural reason. It is the general belief of nations, from remote antiquity to the days of our present endurance. And where is the so remarkable credulity in believing, that guardian spirits may attend the bed of departing mortals? and if so, that they are appointed for wise (however to us inscrutable) purposes? and that benevolence, mercy, and heavenly love, must be predicated of them in its most abundant purity? How, then, shall erring mortality venture to charge them with inconsistency? And yet, (and the remark is made with reluctance,) it is a fact, that Dr. Hibbert, speaking on this subject, says, "The guardian

spirits who honour the beds of dying patients with a visit, adopt a line of conduct never to be depended upon for consistency. As harbingers to heaven, they show the same readiness in offering their services of introduction to sinners as to saints. This fact still continues to meet with confirmation from many modern visionary narratives, the subjects of which are the visible tokens of salvation, and beatific visions, (if they may be so called,) enjoyed by the most dissolute and abandoned of human beings at the hour of death*.”

Independent of the more than levity of language, and uncharitable doctrine expressed in sentiments which maintain that *every apparent* dissolute character may not, even to the last—“the eleventh hour”—sincerely repent; it is, to say the least, rather an unqualified and unsupported assertion, to affirm, that *all alike*, sinners and saints, have similar beatific visions at their departure out of life. Instances undoubtedly are on record of a very opposite description, as regards “the most dissolute and abandoned of human beings at their hour of death;” when,

Sick with disquietude, their departure was without peace.

And if some evil doers may be as the recipients of

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 190, first edit. or 345, second edit. It would almost appear, were not the proceeding contrary to philosophical arrangement, that Dr. Hibbert had first formed his theory, and then sought for arguments and evidence in its support.

such blessed communications, who, that is not able to inspect the inmost thoughts, shall say what redeeming qualities may lie concealed from human eye?

But if, agreeable to these opinions of Dr. Hibbert, such spectral scenes are to be attributed to, that is, are solely the effect of, "past feelings renovated," it might not be an unreasonable question to ask, how it is that the dissolute and abandoned, suffering under the pangs of disease, and the agonies of an upbraiding conscience, with corporeal sensations and mental ideas of past scenes of anything but beatific, how it is, that in the extreme of mental and bodily endurance, their "past feelings renovated" should be of this blissful description, so contrary to what (assuming his theory to be correct) must necessarily occur? for,

Horror gnaws the guilty soul
Of dying sinners; while the good man sleeps
Peaceful and calm, and with a smile expires.—GLYNN.

That such is the theory, and such the unqualified sentiments of Dr. Hibbert, is quite evident throughout the whole of his 'Philosophy of Apparitions,' as appears, not only from the preceding, but from the general tenor of his work; and might be proved by abundant reference. A striking instance of which occurs at page 110*, where, after an extract

* Second edit. p. 155.

from Turner's 'History of Remarkable Providences,' he says, "I shall merely *repeat* the observation which I made, that it is by no means uncommon in a far advanced and moribund state of hectic symptoms, and, indeed, in the last stage of *many other* corporeal affections, that the patient should see apparitions, which may also be of a cheering description. The frequency of this incident being kept in view, an explanation is readily afforded of the numerous communications which pious individuals on their death-bed are supposed to have held with benignant spirits. *That all such alleged visitants, as they stand recorded in profane history, are illusory, I must decidedly maintain.*"

In thus unhesitatingly and positively asserting, "that all such alleged visitants, as they stand recorded in profane history, are illusory," Dr. Hibbert is probably not aware of the conclusion which might be drawn from such avowal; for, it is an undeniable fact, that some of those appearances recorded by profane historians, are to be found in the Holy Scriptures; and these, if true in sacred writ, are also true in other records. If a profane author gives circumstantially a detail worthy of credence in one instance, why is he to be discredited for a similar account in another? Not, surely, because it is not to be found in the Bible,

for that contains the records of only one peculiarly favoured nation. And be it remembered, that the sacred writings are not to be adduced as corroborating profane history, though the latter may, in such instances as occur, be reasonably brought forward as corroborative of the former. Thus, if we find the same circumstances recorded in both, the profane historian corroborates the sacred records, while these establish the truth of the other, and give a weighty authority to their general authenticity.

“The misfortune is, that men are apt to run themselves into greater difficulties than those they endeavour to avoid; and whilst they take such care to screen themselves from the suspicion of being over credulous, especially in cases which carry the *appearance* of a miracle, they not only call in question the most pregnant testimonies of the like facts in profane history, both ancient and modern, but likewise cast a distant reflection on the divine historian, and those inspired writers who have mentioned the same facts after him, as if they had designedly made choice of such terms in their recording of them, as would make them appear more supernatural than they really were*.”

How the *frequency* of occurrence in such sin-

* Universal History.

gularly interesting instances of communication with benignant spirits at the hour of dissolution can afford a ready explanation, or prove their illusive nature, is not very evident. It is an argument equally strong for the converse of the opinion. Neither is the extract given very appropriate, if meant as illustrative of such scenes being nothing more than "*past feelings renovatèd*;" for, says the recipient, "I see a vision of the joys of heaven," of which she speaks in terms of rapture beyond any ideas of mortal scenes *previously* experienced.

Upon a candid and impartial examination, as far as the limited powers of human investigation allow, there can be no hesitation in saying, that so far from the last hours of sinners and saints being alike subject to beatific visions, such spectral scenes, or however else denominated, and from whatever cause arising, would be uniformly found in just accordance with the internal qualities of the agent; and this is quite certain, that many, very many instances are on record, of both one and the other extreme*. Indeed, it is further ob-

* "What a blessing to mankind, in himself, and in his writings, was the ingenious, humble, and pious Boyle! What a common pest to society was the fallacious, proud, and impious Hobbes! Accordingly, we find the former bade adieu to this world with the utmost serenity, honour, and hope; while the other went out of it in the dark, with an odium on his name, as well as with terrible apprehensions of an unknown future."

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

served, in the same or following page, though with an evident view to their being illusory, that, "it is consolatory to think, that, on such occasions, the quality of his (the devout Christian's) waking visions has *accidentally* harmonized so well with the prospect of those heavenly blessings which are promised as the reward of a well-spent life." And why does "the quality of his visions harmonize so well with a previous well-spent life?" The answer must be, that such being the uniform tenor of his conduct, the "renovated images of the mind" may be expected to be of a beatific description: how, then, does this agree with the assertion, that these beatific visions are also enjoyed by the most dissolute and abandoned equally with others? It then only remains to class them with the "fortunate coincidences,"—the fortuitous effects of chance: but this is untenable from their "frequent occurrence."

Let us not, then, question the conduct of our invisible guardians, if such there be,—and who shall disprove it on any ground of argument, independent of the firm rock on which we take our stand?—let us not, therefore, I repeat, attack the consistency of beings of superior purity, and, through them, of their Creator and ours. Let us rather humbly and sincerely endeavour, and it will not be found difficult, to reconcile apparent incon-

sistencies, by due allowances for our erring and short-sighted nature, which must ever be liable to fallible judgment, for want of that prescience, which can only be known to Him, "to whom the secrets of all hearts are open." In candour, however, it must be acceded, that Dr. Hibbert does not altogether deny the possibility of supernatural appearances, but limits their occurrence to the apostolic age. But, it may be asked, on what ground this opinion is formed? Revelation gives no limit to divine power or control: the annals of mankind afford no proof of such limitation; but, on the contrary, the universal opinion of all ages and nations is for it; the light of nature is not against it: and, reasoning from analogy, what has been may be again.

CHAPTER V.

*Further Supernatural Appearances noticed in the
'Philosophy of Apparitions.'*

“ God conducteth what men call chance.”

HARVEY'S MEDITATIONS.

“ Ignorant that chances are the results of secret causes.”

AMUSEMENTS IN RETIREMENT.

HAVING endeavoured, in the preceding chapter, to support the reasonable belief that guardian spirits do exist, and may sometimes visibly interfere in the concerns of mortality, the present will be appropriately devoted to the further detail of some of those relations which more peculiarly affect this subject. And the case of Theodorus, as mentioned at page 308 * of the 'Philosophy of Apparitions,' is well deserving of serious attention.

Theodorus, who suffered martyrdom under the emperor Julian the Apostate, underwent a continuous torture for ten hours. While enduring the extremity of pain, he was comforted by (as he con-

* 369 of the second edition.

ceived) a bright messenger from heaven, “ who allayed his sufferings by wiping the perspiration from his body, and by pouring cold water upon his irritated limbs,” till he was free from pain.

It is a fact, that the martyr “ continued on the scaffold, in the sight of all men, smiling, and even singing, until it was thought expedient to take him down.” This was conceived to be in consequence of supernatural interposition, and why should we doubt it? Because, says Dr. Hibbert, tortures prolonged to a certain degree cease to have their wonted effect; “ instead of inflicting pain, the sensations which they induced were of a grateful description, and, eventually, they extended their influence to the renovated feelings of the mind.” (how?) And he further adds, “ such is the effect which takes place when causes of acute suffering are unremittingly prolonged, and when their influence, *which has become grateful*, is imparted to ideas of an equally grateful description.” Thus, he more than intimates that the martyr became, by continuance of torture, sensible to pleasurable feelings! and, as a sort of corroborating proof, instances the practice of the executioner, in the infliction of the torture, remitting the application that it might not prove grateful in its effects!!!—Surely the only grateful corporeal feeling which the agonized wretch on the rack can hope for, is a remission of his tor-

tures, or a release by death. It is pretty certain, that the fear of the latter termination, which would snatch the victim of tyranny from the iron grasp of persecution, alone induces a relaxation in the administration of the torture. Ask the military delinquent, under the last lash which the attending surgeon allows to all but expiring nature, if his feelings are pleasurable;—ask the victim of casualty, on the point of dissolution;—ask the sufferer from unremitted attacks of chronic disease—if their sensations are alleviated by continuance? But, perhaps, the case of Theodorus was a “fortuitous coincidence.”

Divested of the evident intention of thereby supporting a favourite hypothesis, the facts (for such they are) might certainly be most reasonably accounted for, by admitting them to be the result of supernatural aid; for, however the effect was produced, illusive or not, still it was of a grateful and most consoling description, and must, in either view, be regarded as the special interference of a benign providence. Why then so strenuously contend against the possibility of a spiritual communication?

The case of Gregory the Moravian* also records, that “under the rack he fell into a swoon;

* Mentioned by Dr. Hibbert, p. 310 first edit., or 370 second edit.

during which, it is said, he had a vision of the three men who were, six years after, elected the first bishops of the brethren." From whence arose this renovated idea of the identity of the three individuals who subsequently were elected bishops, does not appear, unless from a "fortunate coincidence." For no other remark occurs, except that "examples of this kind have been so *frequently* recorded, that poets have even attempted to dramatise them;"—of which an instance is given from Massinger. And what does this prove? If it proves anything, it is, that the poet had dramatised,—in all probability from a received general belief of their truth,—the very sentiments and opinions which Dr. Hibbert is striving to controvert.

Another singular chain of coincidences is that relating to Dr. Donne*. This is introduced by the remark, that, in various biographies, such events "have only found a place, because a fortuitous coincidence with the subject of the phantasm and subsequent events, has served to countenance the popular views entertained regarding the sacred mission of apparitions."

Dr. Donne, a gentleman of education, a poet, possessed of much amiable feeling, and strong conjugal affection for a beloved wife, whom he had

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 352 first edit., or p. 332 second edit.

married against the consent of her father, Sir George Moore, was induced, by family circumstances not necessary to mention here, to accompany Sir Robert Drury on his political mission to Paris*. It may well be conceived,—without at all affecting the point at issue,—that he was, under the acute feelings of separation, enduring very considerable uneasiness, from having left her at one of the most anxious periods, she being then enceinte with her first child.

I will concede that it was most natural for him to be constantly dwelling on this early separation, to see her in his day-dreams, to commune with her in his night's repose;—nay more, I will concede it to be probable, that, during these most interesting and anxious moments, his “past feelings renovated” should constantly reproduce the idea of the one object most dear to his affections; and further, that he should even fancy many ideal evils befalling her, even unto death. But, that he should, *from imagination alone*, see her with a dead infant in her arms at the *very same period* in which this event did actually occur, is surely something beyond a mere fortuitous coincidence. Why did not his over anxious mind picture the death of the mother? an event, in every way, more likely to present

* In the year 1612.

itself to his apprehensive imagination ; indeed, so much so, that it appears the messenger despatched home by Sir Robert Drury in consequence of the appearance, had orders to enquire “ if Mrs. Donne was living, and, if alive, in what condition ? ” for when they parted he had left her in “ an ill habit of body.” Moreover, the birth having been premature,—two days only after Dr. Donne had arrived in Paris,—renders an illusive appearance of circumstantial facts still more unlikely*.

The particulars related of Ben Jonson’s vision of his eldest son, during the time of the plague in London †, are, it must be allowed, not so impressive as the preceding ; nevertheless, the remarkable coincidences of time are too forcible to admit of Dr. Hibbert’s conjectural explanation ; namely,

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 354 first edit., or 333 second edit. “ Two days after Dr. Donne had arrived in Paris, he was left alone in a room, where he had been dining with Sir Robert Drury and a few companions. Sir Robert returned about an hour afterwards. He found his friend in a state of ecstasy, and so altered in his countenance that he could not look upon him without amazement. The Doctor was not able for some time to answer the question, *what had befallen him ?*—but, after a long and perplexed pause, at last said, “ I have seen a dreadful vision since I saw you ;—I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me through this room, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms. This I have seen since I saw you.” To which Sir Robert answered,—“ Sure, Sir, you have slept since I went out ; and this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for you are now awake.” Donne replied,—“ I cannot be more sure that I now live, than that I have not slept since I saw you ; and am as sure that at her second appearing she stopped, looked me in the face, and vanished.”

† Ib. 351 first edit., or 331 second edit.

that “the poet’s mental excitement had resulted from plethora,” occasioned by his entertainment at Sir Robert Cotton’s residence in the country,—a vague surmise, and untenable ground of argument.

There is also one transcribed* “for no other reason than because it is better told than most ghost-stories.” I trust that a better reason may appear for copying the transcript. “No reasonable doubt,” says Dr. Hibbert, “can be placed on the authenticity of the narrative, as it was drawn up by the Bishop of Gloucester † from the recital of the young lady’s father ‡.”

“Sir Charles Lee, by his first lady, had only one daughter, of which she died in childbirth; and when she was dead, her sister, the Lady Everard, desired to have the education of the child, and she was by her very well educated, till she was marriageable, and a match was concluded for her with Sir William Perkins, but was then prevented in an extraordinary manner.

“Upon a Thursday night, she, thinking she saw a light in her chamber after she was in bed, knocked for her maid, who presently came to her; and she asked, ‘why she left a candle burning in her chamber?’ The maid said she ‘left none, and

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 169 first edit., or 232 second edit.

† Dr. Wm. Nicholson.

‡ This took place in 1662.

there was none but what she had brought with her at the time ;' then she said it was the fire, but that, her maid told her, was quite out, and said she believed it was only a dream ; whereupon she said, it might be so, and composed herself again to sleep. But about two of the clock she was awakened again, and saw the apparition of a little woman between her curtain and her pillow, who told her she was her mother, that she was happy, and that by twelve of the clock that day she should be with her. Whereupon she knocked again for her maid, called for her clothes, and, when she was dressed, went into her closet, and came not out again till nine, and then brought out with her a letter sealed to her father, brought it to her aunt, the Lady Everard, told her what had happened, and declared, that as soon as she was dead it might be sent to him. The Lady thought she was suddenly fallen mad, and thereupon sent presently away to Chelmsford for a physician and surgeon, who both came immediately ; but the physician could discern no indication of what the lady imagined, or of any indisposition of her body ; notwithstanding, the lady would needs have her let blood, which was done accordingly. And when the young woman had patiently let them do what they would with her, she desired that the chaplain might be called to read prayers ; and when prayers were ended, she took

her guitar and psalm-book, and sat down upon a chair without arms, and played and sang so melodiously and admirably, that her music-master, who was there, admired at it. And near the stroke of twelve, she rose and sat herself down in a great chair with arms, and presently fetching a strong breathing or two, immediately expired, and was so suddenly cold, as was much wondered at by the physician and surgeon. She died at Waltham, in Essex, three miles from Chelmsford, and the letter was sent to Sir Charles, at his house in Warwickshire; but he was so affected with the death of his daughter, that he came not till she was buried; but when he came, he caused her to be taken up, and to be buried with her mother at Edmonton, as she desired in her letter."

And what are Dr. Hibbert's remarks on this highly interesting narrative? Unable, it may be presumed, to account for it in any other way, and because the medical practitioners sent for on the occasion could discern no symptoms of indisposition, he, without the slightest foundation, concludes at once, that "whatever might have been averred by a physician of the *olden time*, with regard to the young lady's sound state of health during the period she saw her mother's ghost, it may be asked, if any practitioner at the present day would have been proud of such an opinion,

especially when death followed so promptly after the spectral impression?" a very brief way of getting over the difficulties; and very consistently followed, by observing of her death, "that the circumstance was a fortunate one*."

On the other hand, it may be very reasonably asked, why the opinion of the two medical practitioners are so peremptorily called in question? The opinion of Dr. Hibbert plainly is, that the youthful female was in the last stage of consumption; and he quotes a few lines of poetry, applicable enough had it really been a case of that description, but tending to no proof whatever. And why assert that she was consumptive, even unto death? So far from there being any corroborative, presumptive, or even remote proof of this, it may safely be affirmed that the very reverse was the fact. Is it likely that a "young and lovely female," in her rank of life, being an only and beloved child, should fall a victim, an unperceived victim, to such an insidious disease without notice? for it does not appear that there was any previous medical advice, or occasion for it. Is it at all probable that her nearest female relation, under whose fostering care every incidental circumstance, every incipient symptom, or other sign of debility, would doubtless have been

* (For the hypothesis?)

most promptly attended to, with affectionate solicitude; could she be so wilfully blind to an enfeebled constitution, as to wait the, so near, approach of dissolution without a notion of its advances? But this could not be; for we find this interesting young lady was on the point of marriage; and on this singular occurrence, and request of her niece, the only impression of the Lady Everard is an idea of insanity, and bleeding the remedy proposed and acceded to; a remedy, of all others, the most unlikely to be employed, even by “physicians of the olden time,” to one sinking gradually into, and even then in, the arms of death; yea, so very near, that, in Dr. Hibbert’s idea, the over exertion of an hymn of praise sufficed to extinguish the all but expiring lamp of existence. Surely, surely, this is warping evidence in favour of unsupported opinions to the extremest verge, independently of the not yet accounted for coincidence of time, when expiring nature gave testimony to the verity of the prediction.

Another remarkable incident, embodied in the ‘Philosophy of Apparitions *,’ is that of the cele-

* *Philosophy of Apparitions*, p. 355, first edit., or p. 334, second edit.—This relation is given by another author more correctly, from *Baronii Annales*, tom. v., as follows:—

“Cæsar Baronius tells us, that there was an entire friendship betwixt Michael Mercatus the elder, and Marsilius Ficinus; and this friendship was the stronger betwixt them by reason of a mutual agreement in their studies, and an equal veneration for the doctrines

brated apparition of Ficinus, to Michael Mercato the elder, in fulfilment of a previous understanding between those illustrious friends, that, whichsoever first departed this life should, if possible, apprise the survivor of his condition. This circumstance actually took place at the very moment of the decease of the former at Florence! Dr. Ferrier, in his 'Essay towards a Theory of Apparitions,' observes, that "many attempts have been made to discredit this story, but I think," says he, "the evidence has never been shaken." He adds, "I

of Plato. It fell out that these two discoursed together (as they used) of the state of man after death, according to Plato's opinion, (and there is extant a learned epistle of Marsilius to Michael Mercatus upon the same subject); but when their disputation and discourse was drawn out somewhat long, they shut it up with this firm agreement—'That whichsoever of these two should first depart out of this life (if it might be) should ascertain the survivor of the state of the other life, and whether the soul be immortal or not.' Some time after this agreement was made, it fell out, that while Michael Mercatus was one morning early at his study, upon the sudden he heard the noise of a horse upon the gallop, and then stopping at his door, withal he heard the voice of Marsilius his friend, crying to him, 'Oh, Michael! Oh, Michael! these things are true, they are true!' Michael, wondering to hear his friend's voice, rose up and opened the casement, he saw the back of him whom he had heard, in white, and galloping away upon a white horse. He called after him, 'Marsilius, Marsilius!' and followed him with his eye; but he soon vanished out of sight. He, amazed at this extraordinary accident, very solicitously enquired if anything had happened to Marsilius, (who lived then at Florence, where he also breathed his last,) and he found, upon strict enquiry, that he died at that very time, wherein he was thus heard and seen by him."—And Dr. Ferrier further states, that, according to Baronius, Mercato "after this occurrence neglected all profane studies, and addicted himself entirely to divinity."—"This story was told to Baronius by the grandson of Mercato, who was Prothonotary of the Church, and a man of the greatest probity, as well as of general knowledge."

entertain no doubt that Mercato had seen what he described ; in following the reveries of Plato, the idea of his friend, and of their compact, had been revived, and had produced a spectral impression, during the solitude and awful silence of the early hours of study."

If these events, and others of a like nature, are to be accounted for by the vague subterfuge of the doctrine of chances, credulity must surely be stretched to the utmost extent. For what but the very excess of credulity could imagine the accumulation of "fortuitous coincidences," which led Mercato at that *identical* moment to his study ; there, at that *identical* moment, to read Plato, and at that *identical* moment that particular part of his works, which should, at that *identical* moment, revive the idea of his friend Ficinus ; so that, at that *identical* moment, his "past feelings should be so vividly renovated," that, at the very *identical* moment in which his friend expired, he should be vividly impressed with his appearance ? Moreover, the assertion that Mercato was "following the reveries of Plato," is mere supposition ; and, even were it so, of no weight, as there are too many simultaneous coincidences to be accounted for, before the assumption of Dr. Ferrier can be tenable.

Very similar are the circumstances attending

the appearance of the Viscount Dundee to Lord Balcarras*, who, in confinement at the castle of Edinburgh, and perhaps even unconscious of what was impending, saw the apparition of the former enter his bed-room at the very time he fell at the battle of Killiecranky. "The spectre drew aside the curtain of his friend's bed, looked steadfastly at him, leaned for some time on the mantel-piece, and then walked out of the room. The Earl, not aware at the time that he was gazing upon a phantasm, called upon Dundee to stop. News soon arrived of the unfortunate hero's fate." The observation, that "of the state of Lord Balcarras's health at the time, it has not been deemed necessary that a syllable should transpire," is of much less importance than Dr. Hibbert may suppose: let it be reasonably explained why the apparition took place at that very peculiar period? But, the state of his Lordship's health not being mentioned, and no apparent motive for the omission, the presumption is that he was in health. And, it is a remarkable circumstance, and worthy of note, that, in cases of this description, it is not the morbid individual who sees the apparition, but the one in sound health.

The very singular and, as yet, unaccounted for

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 168, first edit. or p. 231, second edit.

coincidences of time, and other circumstances, in these and many similar instances of supernatural appearances, is an indisputable fact, of so striking a complexion, that it may justly and reasonably be demanded, whether it is easier to believe in this doctrine of chances, these “fortuitous coincidences,” or to credit the popular, and surely not impossible, if, indeed, improbable opinion of occasional intercourse with the spirits of those, “not dead, but gone before?”

“Curious is it to observe,” says a living author*, “how incredulous men are in some things, and how extravagantly—nay, how miraculously—credulous in others!”

On the doctrine of chances, “events governed by chance, or by no perceivable law,” the last, the only slender prop of a fallacious argument, to discredit a series of well-authenticated relations, it may be observed, that, according to that system, any given event can occur only once in a given number of times. Now either this is true, or it is not true; if not true, the argument, feeble as it is, falls to the ground, and,

Like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leaves not a wreck behind.

If it be true, it follows that it must be under, or

* *Vide* Bucke's *Beauties, Harmonies, and Sublimities of Nature*, vol. iv. p. 317.

subservient to some governing principle, some controlling power—

That power
Which erring men call chance.

And if so, this governing principle, this controlling power shall, and does, as essentially effect the intended purposes by “fortuitous coincidences,” as by other more impressive means. That we should, however, thus industriously seek to discredit the mental perceptions of a better, and really a more probable belief, is one of those strange, those “passing strange” anomalies, which human nature, in the assumption of superior discernment, is too apt to display.

But the possibility of even this slender *chance* of escape cannot be admitted; for I may venture to maintain, that no “fortuitous coincidences,” no “lucky chance,” no “fortunate combination of circumstances,” can ever satisfactorily explain these and other like phenomena. The extreme of credulity cannot believe, though the cautious sceptic may assert, that such unsought, such unexpected events, should simultaneously occur. And further, by what other than supernatural information (sleeping or waking, it matters not) could an obscure individual become possessed of a secret, known only to, and evidently influential in no slight degree with a minister and a favourite,

next only in power to royalty; for such was the celebrated, though unfortunate Duke of Buckingham under Charles the First.

It is a just remark, and well worthy of attention, that, "in metaphysical reasoning, when fanciful analogies are substituted for a rigid adherence to stubborn facts, it is satisfactory only in a superficial view, and will not stand the test of investigation*;" with such

The soul can scarce above the body rise,
And all we see is with corporeal eyes.—POMFRET.

* For this extract I am indebted to the original impression of the fourth volume of Messrs. Kirby and Spence's Etymology, page 27; since which, a reprint of the pages 25 to 32 has been bound up with the work, and the above is no longer found there.

CHAPTER VI.

On Existence, and Mental and Material Influence.

“Hobbes first suggested the senseless hypothesis which inculcates the belief, that the mental powers of animals are proportionate to the weight of their brains, compared with the weight of their bodies.”—*Beauties, Harmonies, and Sublimities of Nature.*

I HAVE observed, that, according to this novel theory of Dr. Hibbert, our existence consists only of sensations, but of two kinds—sensations present, and sensations past, renovated in different degrees; excluding, if not, indeed, denying the possibility of mental communications with spiritual existences, and, in fact, “written with the view of confuting all the superstitious absurdities connected with the popular belief in apparitions*.” This opinion, however, is qualified by confining the argument to the period which has elapsed since the apostolic age.

Conceiving this to be a correct view of the tendency or bearing of the ‘Philosophy of Ap-

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 1, first edit., or p. 13, second edit.

paritions,' I proceed to adduce some of those passages more particularly confirming it; and after offering a few comments naturally arising therefrom, shall finally endeavour to draw some reasonable conclusions for further consideration.

That important vital fluid, the blood, possesses, according to this theory, an inherent dilatibility and contractibility—producing, in the former state, pleasurable sensations, in the latter, unpleasant and distressing ones; and displaying a general correspondence with the mind: in both cases, vivifying mental impressions. These impressions are, it appears, augmented by various physical agents—as nitrous oxide, which is assumed to produce dilatation in the blood, and, consequently, increased pleasurable feelings: the effects of febrile symptoms are affirmed to be the reverse. But some exceptions in both cases are recorded; and it may be even questioned, whether, after all, the whole assumption is not in a great measure hypothetical, and unsupported by facts. Dr. Hibbert, however, draws this inference, that “a pathological principle has been established,” and that “recollected images of thought, vivified to the height of actual impressions, exclusively, or nearly so, constitute the states of the mind*,” or, in other words,

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 19, first edit., or p. 70, second edit.

that sensations and states of the mind are identical, whether they may be “those states of the mind which are induced when causes impressing our organs of sense are present, or those which occur as revivals of prior mental states*.” This is the metaphysical view of the question; upon which, however, I do not intend entering further than may be requisite to elucidate the subject under consideration. It may yet be as well to suggest the necessity of keeping in mind a due distinction between the mind itself and the states thereof, or sensations.

The nervous system is also, as well as the blood, said to be endowed with the vital principle; and, together with the blood, to produce various states of the mind. Thus, one set of nerves act from the surface, producing “sensations and renovated feelings”—that is, sensations present and sensations past: another description of nerves are supposed to act the reverse of this: for Dr. Hibbert says, or rather, he *suspects*, that there are “two descriptions of nerves, which are more to be ascertained by their ultimate effects on the mind, than by anatomical observation”—one originating on the surface, and thus conveying outward sensations to the brain; the other, originating in the brain and

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 15, first edit., or p. 66, second edit.

spinal chord, which acts when “the repetition of a definite sensation shall be followed by a renovation of past feelings (an idea) with which it was before associated ;” and he adds, that these two descriptions of (*suspected*) nerves seem to be *necessary* to explain many cases of phantasms*.

Now, admitting the existence of these two descriptions of nerves, is it not more just to imagine, that they may be designed by infinite wisdom to answer the distinct purposes of the two natures of our existence here,—the one, conveying outward sensations to mental perception, the other, the agent of mental volition to the corporeal frame in its various parts?

But it is really too much for Dr. Hibbert to demand implicit credence for the unsupported creations of his own imagination, when he is so little inclined to allow any force to the opinions of others, even though confirmed by facts, founded upon testimony of the most satisfactory nature.

It is further observed, that “the irregular action of those nerves, upon which the production”—or rather, the perception—“of external impressions, and the renovated feelings of the mind,”—sensations present and past,—“depends, is indicated by

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 316 and 327: this, however, is omitted in the second edition, and thus this *necessary* method of explanation abandoned.

false affections communicated to the organs of sense*;" and Dr. Hibbert therefore concludes that "it is manifest, that, with numerous morbid affections of the body, arising from variously excited states of the circulating system, or of the nervous influence, the production in the mind of spectral illusions is *necessarily* connected †." Though, he elsewhere ‡ adds, that morbid causes do not alter the quality, but only add to the vividness of the states of the mind, and thus co-operate in raising its pleasurable or painful states. From this, I conceive, it ought to follow, that in febrile symptoms producing horrific impressions, the mind must previously possess the germ of such impressions ready to be renovated and vivified into horrific reality, and *vice versa*! I much doubt if this is borne out by facts.

"My next object," says Dr. Hibbert §, "is to give validity to the conjecture, that past feelings are renovated through the medium of organs of

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 80, first edit., or p. 117, second edit.

† Ib. p. 86, first edit., or p. 122, second edit.

‡ Ib. p. 179, first edit., or 340, second edit.—"The action of all morbid causes, capable of influencing the states of the mind, merely consists in an *addition* being made to the vividness of such qualities of our feelings, as had previously been rendered pleasurable or painful by the various objects which, from infancy, impress in a definite manner our several organs of sense. Thus, the nitrous oxide adds to the vividness of pleasurable feelings, but has no power of *absolutely changing* the quality of those mental states, which, from constitutional causes, are more or less painful."

§ Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 286, first edit., or 244, second edit.

sense;" but, if so, it follows that the organs of sense are alone the cause of ideas, or, which is the same thing, that the organs of sense being acted upon by outward objects, cause those states of the mind which are termed ideas; and, consequently, that ideas are produced by material action and mental conception, which is a contradiction in terms, materialism being the *primum mobile*.

Let us reflect for a moment on this position. Pleasurable feelings, from whatever cause they may be derived, depend upon freedom being given to the expansive power of the circulating mass; while pain is produced by any cause which tends to deprive it of this property: for, "from the different circumstances of the circulating fluid, as it supplies different structures of the human frame, arise our various susceptibilities of sensation."

The drift of this reasoning appears to be, that the mind, or various mental states, are the result only of material action, since the circulating fluid, being contracted by fever or dilated by health, is the sole cause, through the agency of the nerves, of the existence of painful or pleasurable feelings,—states of the mind,—in such conditions of the system. But here it may be asked, by what is fever caused? Frequently by contagion, or other material action; in which case, the mind, as connected with the corporeal frame, must be, to a

certain degree, submissive to its influence. But this is *not always* the case; for, is not fever frequently the result of anxiety of mind? Is not a healthy state of the circulating fluids induced by a mind at ease, and cheerfulness of mental disposition? Nay, further, is not the state of the mind itself a powerful aid in the progress of disease, or return to health? And, although the mind may be oppressed by bodily suffering, or exhilarated by pleasurable feelings, is it not always in our power, to a certain extent, mentally to control such temporary feelings?

By such superior power, the reasoning soul,
 Can each reluctant appetite control;
 Can every passion rule, and every sense.—BLACKMORE.

The instance adduced, that “the mere idea of some favourite food is well known to occasionally excite the salivary glands no less than if the sapid body itself were actually present, and stimulating the papillæ of the fauces*,” instead of supporting the argument, rather tells against it; since herein cause is taken for effect. It is not any actual, any material sensation which excites the salivary glands, but the idea, the mental idea, which produces this effect; which idea is as essentially distinct from actual sensation as is the apparition

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 288, first edit., or p. 246, second edit.

or appearance of some unknown form, from "past feelings renovated." If sensations and ideas, the one corporeal, the other mental, are all and only the result of an "absolute affection" of the organic structure, we are, I fear, approaching very near to the borders of materialism. The debatable ground, thus too easily surrendered, would render the tenure of our inheritance very questionable.

Does not the preceding rather prove, that, although from the different circumstances of the "circulating fluid, as it supplies the different structures of the human frame, arise our various susceptibilities of sensation," the mind may be constrained to a temporary submission to the powers, or effects of organic sensation,—yet is the mind, or spirit, the governing principle of this material frame, and capable of controlling those effects which proceed from the state of the circulating mass? And is not this in our every-day experience? Thus, we feel the sensation of fatigue from exercise or labour, and may, or may not, as the mind wills, submit to its influence. We are conscious of a languor, and the feelings of incipient disease; we give way to these sensations, and a fit of illness ensues, or we mentally exert ourselves, and, arousing the energies of the mind, and thence of the body, drive off the insidious attack.

The energetic control of the mind over the cor-

poreal senses, or, what is equivalent, the power which the mind possesses over the reception of outward impressions, or sensations, is perhaps rarely more fully developed than in that mental principle, commonly termed abstraction; the habit of which is attainable to a very considerable extent by culture, and is frequently found of great importance, as well in the philosophical pursuit of scientific attainments as in the almost every-day occurrences of common life. And it is, perhaps, even more forcibly shown in the latter, where it might be least expected, as has been most acutely remarked by Miss Edgeworth, who has judiciously observed, that "Persons of ordinary abilities, tradesmen and shopkeepers, in the midst of the tumult of a public city, in the noise of rumbling carts and rattling carriages, amidst the voice of a multitude of people talking upon various subjects, amidst the provoking interruptions of continual questions and answers, and in the broad glare of a hot sun, can command and abstract their attention, so far as to calculate yards, ells, and nails, to cast up long sums in addition right to a farthing, and to make multifarious bills with quick and unerring precision *."

* These, and numerous instances, might be adduced to prove, that unless the soul be willing, outward sensations are oftentimes in a vain activity. "The picture," says a clerical writer, "may be painted upon the retina of the eye, the sound may strike upon the

It is plain, that if Dr. Hibbert's theory was established, the position, that ideas arise from outward sensations, would assume the form and quality of an axiom; for, since "an idea is nothing more than a past feeling renovated," and "organs of sense are the actual medium through which past feelings are renovated," therefore, "the susceptibility of the mind to sensations and ideas ought to refer to similar circumstances of corporeal structure*."

Now, as ideas may become more vivid than sensations, producing, according to this theory, spectral illusions, it should appear, that a spectral illusion is nothing more than an idea,—an idea is only a past feeling renovated,—a past feeling renovated is renovated by means of the organs of sense,—the organs of sense must be acted upon to produce a past feeling renovated; therefore, a *past* feeling renovated is a *present* sensation, and thus a spectral illusion being produced through the medium of the organs of sense, is also a present sensation, the result of organic action.

It is useless to attempt a chain of reasoning without more incontrovertible data than those now produced. And it has been most truly observed,

tympanum of the ear, but neither the one nor the other be received by the intellect unless the internal power or faculty be in action and mediate between them."

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 283, first edit., or p. 246, second edit.

that "the credulity required to support a favourite theory is sometimes stretched to a degree of tension far beyond that of popular belief." It is not a little astonishing to find, in the writings of philosophic discussion in all ages, the many singularly fanciful and improbable conjectures to account for, frequently, the most common phenomena, in order to bend them to support some fanciful hypothesis, when the general opinion, sanctioned, perhaps, by the tradition of ages, shall contain nothing in essence more impossible, or improbable, than other existing circumstances. "If," says Bucke, "we lead a blind man into a field, and inquire of him whether he sees the sun, is it because he answers no, that there is no sun in existence?" So with the mentally blind; if we require their belief in spiritual existences, or communications, is it because they say we cannot see them, or seeing do not believe them, that they are fallacious?

CHAPTER VII.

Sensations, Ideas, and Identity considered.

“And diagrams he draws, t’explain
The learn’d chimeras of his brain.”—FENTON.

IN the eighteenth and following chapters of the Philosophy of Apparitions, a very singular and fanciful formula,—the *novel* result of some *past* feeling renovated,—is projected; whereby it is proposed to measure the immaterial and immeasurable mind, by certain rules applied with a precision approximating to mathematical demonstration. It may therefore be requisite to insert a few observations, in order to examine the foundation upon which this superstructure is raised.

Referring to the scale of existence (if it may be so termed), it will be perceived, that “when sensations and ideas”—past sensations renovate—“are of the same degree of vividness, all notion of present and of past time must naturally cease, or, in other words, there can be no mental conscious-

ness of our feelings* ;” that is to say, our identity, which is existence, ceases ; for it has been previously observed, “ that the notion of the present and of the past, as well as the proper identity of the mind, necessarily enters into our definition of *consciousness*, and that mental consciousness cannot be induced until sensations and ideas have attained a certain degree of vividness †.” And the above observation appears so very important to the subject, as to be repeated at the foot of almost every succeeding tabular view. Thus, according to the various degrees of difference between sensations and ideas, or rather, according to the vividness of present and past sensations, so are our states, from quiescent sleep to infuriate madness ; during the progress to which, it should appear, that as soon as ideas (past sensations renovated) outstrip, in point of vividness, present sensations, that then delirium commences, proceeding onward to extreme excitement.

The remark so frequently referred to, and repeated in the 220th ‡ and subsequent pages of the work, is of great importance to the formula under consideration. Pursuing this reasoning, it is fur-

* *Philosophy of Apparitions*, p. 244 first edit., or p. 392 second edit., Part VI.

† *Ib.* p. 231 first edit., or p. 320 second edit.

‡ *Philosophy of Apparitions*, p. 278 second edit.

thermore observed, that “when it is considered that the human mind can form no notion of the present and of the past, but from the comparative degree of vividness which, during our waking hours, subsists between sensations and ideas, and that the notion of present and past time enters into our definition of consciousness, it must follow, that when sensations arrive at the same degree of vividness as ideas (sensations past but renovated), a state of mental unconsciousness must *necessarily* be the result*.”

The major of the proposition I must be allowed to deny. “That the mind can form no notion of the present and of the past, but from the comparative degree of vividness which subsists between sensations and ideas,”—that is, between sensations present and past,—is more than problematical. Indeed, I conceive that a due investigation of our own conception of past transactions will sufficiently prove the fallacy of such a position; since we shall readily find many circumstances,—even to the trivial events of infancy,—of which we have recollections much more vivid than other transactions of a later date; and yet are we at all times perfectly conscious of their priority of occurrence. “At the distance of five and twenty years,” says Gibbon,

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 247 first edit., or 395 second edit.

“ I can neither forget nor express the strong emotions which agitated my breast as I first approached the eternal city:” was this past feeling renovated ever, in its utmost vividness, mistaken for a present sensation, or supposed to occur subsequently to more recent events?

According to this ingenious formula, mental unconsciousness must necessarily take place four times in the regular progress from the quietude of sleep to intensity of excitement, and return to a tranquil state of perfect sleep again: in common existence twice, at least, in the twenty-four hours; that is, once in the progress to sleep, and the same before we again awake to consciousness.

As Dr. Hibbert sometimes builds not a little on the authority of apt quotations, it may be asked, how our great dramatic bard, the correctness of whose observations on the workings of human nature no one will dispute, could represent his Richard the Third as awakening from his dream—for as a dream the poet represents it—of the visitations of the individuals sacrificed to his tyranny and ambition, previous to the decisive battle of Bosworth field?—How could Shakspeare make his hero to awake from the illusions of sleep with the impression, that the apparitions were still present to his waking eye; and thus gradually, without any interruption of the consciousness of identity, return to a

state of actual sensation?—past sensations vividly renovated thus giving place to sensations present;—spectral illusions to realities;—and where was the point of mental unconsciousness,—what the period when sensations and ideas were equally vivid, and no mental consciousness of them?

But Shakspeare is generally true to nature, and, questionless, was so in this instance. And there is little doubt but that, if we properly investigate the subject, we shall find, that though it may frequently occur that in the progress from wakefulness to sleep, and vice versâ, we may (as indeed often occurs under other circumstances) lose the connecting link for awhile, yet there are times when we do undoubtedly progress from wakefulness to sleep and its illusive scenes, and return to awakened sensations, without losing the consciousness of identity. This would perhaps be a subject of more common experience if we gave our attention more frequently to its consideration.

If this be true, and I think it can scarcely be controverted, the hypothetical statement of the cessation of identity cannot be maintained: for though it is assumed that “it *must* be granted that there exists no mental consciousness during sleep,” it is an assumption which cannot be proved; and as Dr. Hibbert affirms that “it is certainly a reasonable hypothesis, that during our moments of slumber

actual impressions and ideas should occur," it seems even more in accordance to suppose the contrary—namely, that there does exist mental consciousness during sleep. But I conceive that mental consciousness, or identity of spiritual existence, never ceases. It certainly never does in our waking moments, and even in our dreams it will admit of a question whether we ever lose the sense of identity. That we are always conscious thereof in sleep, although not always in after recollection, is highly probable; of which a strong corroborative presumption is, the frequent innate knowledge of having previously dreamed, though we cannot always call to remembrance the particulars. Indeed we cannot always trace every connecting link of our waking transactions; and so it may be during the periods of bodily repose, when, for aught we can prove, the mind may be incursively engaged in those regions, whereof, perhaps, it may be fitting that we should preserve but faint recollections.

"The secrets of another world, perhaps,
Not lawful to reveal *."

Even allowing sensations and ideas, that is to say, sensations present and past, to be, at some periods, equally vivid, which is, after all, a ques-

* Milton. "Our grosser memories," says Sir Thomas Brown, "have then so little hold on our understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awakened souls a confused and broken tale of that that has passed."

tionable position, yet it is neither a necessary nor satisfactory conclusion that mental unconsciousness is the result.

As respects identity, it is said to depend upon a consciousness proceeding from a succession of ideas, or renovated feelings of past sensations, up to present sensations; and that when these renovated sensations become more vivid than present sensations, they appear as present sensations; and thus, taking the precedence of actual sensations, that then conscious identity must be suspended, or at least uncertain. But who, in dreams, or under any spectral illusion (renovated sensation), ever doubted his own proper identity? Furthermore, in order to solve this problem, we are to suppose, that in *every* case of spectral illusion the seer must, and that in some instances very suddenly, pass from a state of present sensations to ideas, *through* a medium state of unconsciousness. And it may also be objected, that if the more vivid sensation is felt as present, and the less vivid as past, we should, by analogy of reasoning, say that the least vivid would be the longest past. Yet we undoubtedly have a more vivid recollection of many things occurring in infancy than of others long after; nevertheless, we well know which has the priority of time. To assert the contrary, would be to require a degree of credulity in the abstract beyond that

which can be warranted to support opinions advanced in aid of any favourite theory.

The chain of identity, (if the expression may be allowed,) being not always in continuous remembrance, is corroborated by Dr. Hibbert's quotation from Locke, "consciousness," says that author, "being interrupted always by forgetfulness, there being no moments of our lives wherein we have the whole train of our past actions before our eyes in one view; but even the best memories losing sight of one part while they are viewing another;" and it is, no doubt, within the observation of many, that, not infrequently, the part we lose sight of is not the most remote in time: in addition to which, the mere transition from a state of sleep to that of wakefulness, may materially tend to throw the previous links of consciousness into oblivion; somewhat in the same way that, in common discourse, a new subject of conversation, or even, at times, the most trivial interruption, will suffice to render the idea of the very previous moment, even though at the point of utterance, as lost to recollection as though it had never occurred; and the strongest exertion of memory is required, and that sometimes in vain, to bring it to recollection. Are we then unconscious of identity? or, is it much to be wondered at if, in passing from the reveries of a dream to waking observation, that we should not be able

—most commonly we do not make the effort—to remember each consecutive mental perception which is, nevertheless, most probably in continuous activity?

Does the immaterial mind require repose? Is it not rather in a state of constant activity, though it may be, as before observed, not always in recollection of the past? How then can identity ever be absent? Sleep, the repose of the corporeal frame, it may be stated, is mostly occasioned by certain inert states of the material organs of sensation; whether produced by the fatigue of over-exertion, from exercise, from physical agency, or from some other analogous cause: still the mind is not inert, but only, as it were, gives way to the fettering powers of the corporeal frame. For, how frequently do we find that, upon some peculiar excitement, the mind, as the governing principle of our nature, successfully resists the approaches of sleep, and of its drowsy influence, for an indefinite period; and that, in defiance of fatigue, or other most powerful inducements.

“What high perfections grace the human mind,
In flesh imprisoned, and to earth confined!
What vigour has she!”—BLACKMORE.

At no period whatever are our ideas or sensations of such a nature, either as to quality, or power, as to produce a conception that we are other than ourselves; a living being, susceptible of the clear

perception of identity. And it is not because that, in the moments of busy occupation, we do not reflect on our identity, that we are unconscious or ignorant thereof; or, to speak more strongly,—deny it*.

But according to Dr. Hibbert's view of these mental states, the effects of material sensations, it appears that unconsciousness precludes spectral impressions, that "phantoms arise,—they vanish,—other illusions of the same sort take their place,—these again vanish †,"—so that in these and similar cases, the mind becomes first unconscious of identity, then alive to ideal illusions, or past feelings renovating,—then again unconscious,—and again in illusion of what is present or what is past: and thus, in a sort of hide and seek uncertainty of existence, it is no wonder that, unconscious of identity and dubious of relative impressions, delirium ensues!!!

In this succession of phantasmagorial deception, this waded uncertainty of mental illusions and identity, it only remains for the theory to give a sufficient reason,—no doubt a simple one when known,—why each alternate unconsciousness and illusion

* The quotation (Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 269 first edit., or p. 416 second edit.) from the Fair Penitent, "At first her rage was dumb, and wanted words," meant to illustrate a state of mental unconsciousness, is surely erroneous: to be, through passion, dumb, and incapable of giving utterance to strong feelings, is not to be unconscious of identity.

† Philosophy of Apparitions, first edit. p. 277, second edit. p. 424.

should vary in the degree they are noted in the table. Possibly, as the surf of the undulating ocean throws up alternate waves, increasing to the third and tenth in succession; so may the tide of mental illusion vary in intensity, conformably to some undiscovered law of the arithmetical progression of past feelings renovated, till, successively and gradually compressed, they,—like a celebrated professor's atmospherical atoms,—lie in accumulated collections, to support the evanescent bubbles of a superincumbent theory. But “the learned often amuse themselves with strange fancies like these, and it was for this that Cicero called Archimedes a trifler.”

CHAPTER VIII.

Somnambulism, and Catalepsy, considered with respect to Identity.

“Be not too hasty to erect general theories from a few particular observations, appearances, or experiments.”

WATTS *on the Mind.*

IN the formula spoken of in the preceding chapter, a portion of the table refers to the states of Somnambulism and Catalepsy; which cannot properly be passed over without a brief notice. On this division of the subject, Dr. Hibbert states, that when ideas, or past feelings renovated, are at a certain degree of vividness,—the sixth or seventh according to the table,—that then “muscular motions obey the impulse of the will* ;” at the seventh degree, “vigorous muscular motions obey the will† ;” as in Somnambulism.

The question here arises, whether there are not instances in which, during sleep, ideas are vivid to that degree, or greater, without producing muscular motion; or, if it is to be taken for granted that

* *Philosophy of Apparitions*, p. 257, first edit., or 403, second edit.

† *Ib.* p. 257, first edit., or 403, second edit.

Somnambulists are the only sleepers who experience ideas, or rather, whose past feelings are renovated in that degree of vividness. That Somnambulism may be produced while ideas and sensations are in certain comparative degrees of vividness, is very probable ; but Somnambulism is not so common a case, but that repeated instances must occur, in which ideas are equally vivid, without “ muscular motion obeying the impulse of the will;” which, if the formula is well founded, ought always to be the effect. Many individuals have experienced dreams so vivid, that the reasoning powers of wakefulness have scarcely sufficed to prove their illusion ; and yet no outward appearance of volition, nor consequent muscular motion, has been observed. How far this investigation may affect the subject of apparitions is not very clear. Somnambulists appear to act from the effects of some mental perceptions, with which, it would seem, that sensations have very little to do. Neither is it very evident in what way this can illustrate a spectral illusion, or impression, than as tending to uphold the tabular view of sensations and ideas ; which, however, if the preceding remarks have any weight, may not be so correct in the context as was imagined.

In Catalepsy, it appears, by the table, “ that sensations and ideas are of equal degrees of vividness ;” when, according to the theory of Dr. Hibbert, “ a

state of unconsciousness ensues*.” “ Yet, as long as there is no consciousness of the present and the past, the muscles maintain the same state of rest or motion which they had acquired previous to the excitement †,” and as, “ in a greater stage of excitement, the more vivid condition of mental feelings induced vigorous muscular actions,” it seems a necessary consequence, if at any period of our lives we should lose our consciousness, that whatever we might be about, whatever our muscular motion, it would continue the same, till our sense of identity returned. If this be really the fact, it may be considered as a most *fortunate coincidence*, that we never forget ourselves under circumstances of muscular motion, the continuance of which might be not a little embarrassing. Though, if the doctrine of *chances* is to be relied upon, we may reasonably expect that a period may arrive, when some curious concatenation of muscular motion may be exhibited in, perhaps by, a whole assemblage of unconscious performers.

On the authority of the late Dr. Good ‡ is detailed “ a recent example of this variety of Catalepsy ;” wherein a youthful student of Gray’s Inn

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 253, first edit., or 400, second edit.

† Ib. p. 271, first edit., or p. 418, second edit.

‡ Ib. p. 271 first edit., or 418 second edit.

continued walking along some of the most populous streets of the metropolis, insensible of time, place, or distance, for nearly an hour.

“Having been attacked,” says Dr. Good, “with a fit of Catalepsy while walking, within a few minutes after having left his chambers, he continued his pace insensibly, and without the slightest knowledge of the course he took. As far as he could judge, the paroxysm continued for nearly an hour, through the whole of which time his involuntary walking continued; at the end of this period he began a little to recover his recollection, and the general use of his external senses. He found himself in a large street, but did not know how he got there, nor what was its name. Upon inquiry, he learnt that he was at the further end of Piccadilly, near Hyde-Park-Corner, to which, when he left his chambers, he had no intention of going. He was extremely frightened, very much exhausted, and returned home in a coach. *He was not conscious of any particular train of ideas that had passed in his mind during the fit.*”

Though not, perhaps, to an equal extent, yet it must be in the recollection of many to have experienced something of this kind, when, intent upon some busy train of thought, they may have continued, partially unconscious of their road, till by some interruptive medium, a more active con-

sciousness has returned, though actual identity was never lost.

A circumstance, not very dissimilar to the preceding, occurred some few years since to a gentleman, an artist, who, late in the evening, after passing over London Bridge, proceeded up Fish-Street Hill, with the intention of turning into Cornhill, in his way to the west end of the town, where he resided. In the abstraction of deep thought, he proceeded unconsciously onward, till very near to Shoreditch Church; when, suddenly, he also “began to recover his recollection,” and, looking around, gave vent to his past feelings renovated, in the unpremeditated exclamation of—“This is not St. Paul’s!” where, probably, he might have purposed taking a coach. A by-stander, hearing the bewildered tone of utterance, assured him, that, though “far from St. Paul’s, he was never nearer the truth in his life.”

But in neither of these instances could the individuals be said to be in doubt of their existence, which the expression, “unconscious of identity,” seems to imply. If, however, by unconsciousness is simply meant,—suspension of reflection upon our personal individuality,—this must certainly occupy by far the greater portion of existence; but if the term be made use of to signify a doubt of identity, then it may be safely affirmed, that in neither of these, nor

any similar circumstances, did it ever take place. When Dr. Good's patient was traversing the various sinuosities, and contending with all the obstructions of a crowded metropolis, for no trifling interval of time, will any one venture to maintain that he was unconscious of existence? Is it not more probable, that some deep train of thought, some abstruse subject, had exclusive occupation of his mind, till suddenly interrupted by a strong external sensation, when all remembrance of recent ideas might be lost to recollection? For thus we sometimes, from sudden interruption, lose the thread of a recent subject of conversation, though not the less for that would consciousness and identity have continued throughout. A state of not very dissimilar, though of inferior extent, must be of not unfrequent occurrence, as well to the literary student full of thought, as to the unlettered peasant who 'whistled as he went for want of thought.'

"While I am walking through the grove before my window," says Darwin, "I do not run against the trees or the branches, though my thoughts are completely engaged on some other object."

The instances adduced* of Sir Humphrey Davy, who, during the period of his inhaling the nitrous oxide, at a particular moment of pleasurable sen-

* Phil. Ap. p. 270, or 417 second edit.

sations, "lost consciousness;" and of another individual, who, when experiencing similar feelings, was "for some time unconscious of existence," are by no means conclusive; since it does not very clearly appear how any one enduring certain sensations, pleasurable or painful, can be said to be unconscious of existence! Besides which, if "unconsciousness precludes spectral impressions*," how is it that these respective individuals, and many others under similar circumstances, having passed the moment of unconsciousness, did not experience some spectral impression?

"We cannot," says Dr. Hibbert, "entertain the least conception of any other states of the mind, than those which must necessarily include sensations or renovated feelings†,"—which renovated feelings, originating in sensations, can only be intended to mean, that the mind, which properly expresses the aggregate qualities of, though it here seems to be used as synonymous with, the soul,—exists only as the organs of sense act upon it! To disprove this, does not the mind, or spirit, although susceptible to the manifold impressions of corporeal sensations, feel itself, at times, intuitively, as it were, independent of materiality? Again, it is stated that "sensations and ideas are nothing more than states

* Phil. Ap. 272, first edit., or p. 419, second edit.

† Ib. p. 214, first edit., or 273, second edit.

of the immaterial mind*,"—"Sensations are states of the mind induced by objects *actually present* and acting upon the organs of sense, while ideas are the renewals of *past* sensations†." From these, and many other similar passages in the Philosophy of Apparitions, it should seem evident that Dr. Hibbert is confounding the *states* of the immaterial mind, with the identified mind or spirit; whereas, the mind, or spirit, is capable of thought, as well as recipient of impressions. Sensations and ideas are *not* the mind itself, any more than various forms of clothing are the body; *there is a difference.*

* Phil. Ap. 230, first edit., 319, second edit.

† Ib. p. 215, first edit., 274, second edit.

CHAPTER IX.

Association of Ideas.

“ Good heaven ! that men, who vaunt discerning sight,
 And, arrogant, from Wisdom’s distant height
 Look down on vulgar mortals who revere
 A cause supreme, should their proud building rear
 Without one prop, the pond’rous pile to bear.”

BLACKMORE’S *Creation.*

THE subject of identity having been already discussed with reference to the possibility of spectral scenes occurring to mental perception, and of supernatural appearances, it now remains only to obtain some just and consistent view of the support, which this peculiar principle of our intuitive knowledge receives from the well-known laws of the association of ideas,—that chain of past feelings renovated, on which depends, for a considerable degree of support, the novel theory promulgated in the philosophy of apparitions.

On this point Dr. Hibbert observes, that “ a question now arises, if ideas, of which we are at any one moment of time totally unconscious, be

still liable to recur, agreeable to the law of association?" And this question appears to be introduced with a view of explaining occurrences similar to that of Nicolai, wherein he says, that, "after frequent accurate observation on the subject, having fairly proved and maturely considered it,"—"these visions, in my case, were not the consequence of any known law of reason, of the imagination, or of the otherwise usual association of ideas." This inquiry is thus sophistically explained—"Past feelings, even should they be those of our earliest moments of infancy, never cease to be under the operation of this principle, and they are constantly liable to be renovated, though they should not be the object of consciousness, at the latest period of our life." How this is to be proved has escaped the Doctor's penetration. He concludes that, "according to this view, any past impression of the mind never becomes, as it were, extinct *."

Is it here meant to be maintained, that all novel ideas, (that is, mental conceptions, whether past feelings renovated or others,) all spectral scenes, though accompanied "with a splendour of such various colours as are unknown to the world below;"—"scenes, so beautiful that I had never in my life

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 330, 331, 332, first edit., or 283, 284, second edit.

seen any thing so agreeable ;”—all supernatural appearances, though they might be of “ unknown forms,” and “ none of known places, objects or persons ;” “ even were it of two angels of so divine a beauty, that imagination could not even form an idea (mental conception) of such perfection ;”—all spiritual communications of circumstances, or events not previously known, or possible to be otherwise known ;—Is it meant in each, and all of these, and numerous other similar and actually occurring cases that, because they can, in a pathological sense, be in no other way accounted for, they must of necessity have pre-existed unconsciously in the mind, totally unknown from some remote period ; and have been renovating only by some *unperceived* link in the association of ideas, the most essential law of which is a continued recurrence of one unbroken, one uninterrupted chain ?

The laws which reason and long experience have firmly established, must not be thus perverted, to aid an hypothesis incapable of accounting for much of the phenomena it attempts in vain to explain. The uncontroverted tradition of successive ages is a safer and a surer foundation, than the reveries of philosophical scepticism. And well has Dr. Davy, upon another occasion, observed, “ That he conceives the common and long received opinion is well

founded, and that of philosophers hastily and erroneously formed *.”

That mental excitement may render ideas, of which we have long been unconscious from their dormant state, vivid objects of consciousness or renovation, is undeniable. “ Thus, it is recorded of a female in France, that while she was subjected to such an influence, the memory of the Armorican language, which she had lost since she was a child, suddenly returned.” But what does this prove? It proves nothing more, than that, for some indefi-

* “ I think,” says the Spectator, vol. vii., No. 110, “ a person who is thus terrified with the imagination of ghosts and spectres, much more reasonable than one who, contrary to the reports of all historians, sacred and profane, ancient and modern, and to the traditions of all nations, thinks the appearance of spirits fabulous and groundless. Could not I give myself up to this general testimony of mankind, I should to the relations of particular persons now living, and whom I cannot distrust in other matters of fact. I might here add, that not only the historians, to whom we may join the poets, but likewise the philosophers of antiquity, have favoured this opinion. Lucretius himself,” continues Addison, and the passage is worth transcribing, were it only to shew the incredible and unphilosophical subterfuges to which some philosophical sceptics have been driven, to maintain their hypothetical opinions,—“ Lucretius himself,” says he, “ though, by the course of his philosophy, he was obliged to maintain that the soul did not exist separate from the body, makes no doubt of the reality of apparitions, and that men have often appeared after their death. This I think very remarkable; he was so pressed with the matter of fact, which he could not have the confidence to deny, that he was forced to account for it by one of the most absurd unphilosophical notions that was ever started. He tells us, that the surfaces of all bodies are perpetually flying off from their respective bodies, one after another; and that these surfaces or thin cases that included each other whilst they were joined in the body, like the coats of an onion, are sometimes seen entire when they are separated from it; by which means we often behold the shapes and shadows of persons who are either dead or absent.”

nite period, her native tongue had faded away from memory, and from some exciting cause been suddenly revived or recollected. But it does not prove, nor attempt to prove, that she was, on the renovation of those past sensations, unconscious of their previous existence * !

Assuming for the moment, that the theory of the Philosophy of Apparitions is well founded, a very natural inquiry would arise on these spectral effects, thus ascribed to the renovation of past feelings. It might very consistently be asked, why the mind of man should renovate the past feelings of many objects altogether foreign to any present or recent sensation ? And it might, also, well be demanded, how we are reasonably to account for spectral appearances occurring at a time, and place, the least probable, or least, if at all, expected, when as Nicolai, in his own case, asserts, “ I could trace no connexion” which such appearances “ had, either with my state of mind, or with my employment, and the other thoughts which engaged my attention † ;” and also, of the converse of the position, when, with some degree of probability, we might look for them, no such events occur.

Perhaps it may be intended to account for these

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 338, first edit., or p. 290 second edit.

† Ib. p. 330, first edit., and p. 283, second edit.

opposing difficulties, when it is stated, that former ideas, of which we have in course of time become unconscious, from each renovation being more and more faint, may, nevertheless, be the subject of vivid renovated feelings. This, however, is much the same as saying, that ideas, or rather original sensations, rendered by *frequent renovation too indistinct for recognition*, become, at times, *vivid spectral impressions*; and although they are past feelings frequently renovated, are nevertheless totally forgotten in their renewal!!!

The same view is proposed in asserting, that the close of a train of uninterrupted ideas “will always be found to consist of renovated feelings, that are too faint to be the objects of consciousness*,” which is, in fact, saying, that we remember that which we have forgotten, and of the existence of which we can have no possible proof; and that these forgotten, or non-existing objects, become so vividly remembered, as to form spectral scenes, vivid even to the most perfect semblance of real existences! How is this paradoxical contradiction to be proved? How can scenes, which are lost to all consciousness, be possibly identified? How can objects forgotten,—perhaps never existing,—be possibly remembered? It is certainly by no means

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 335 first edit., or p. 287, second edit.

a satisfactory method of accounting for supernatural appearances, to assert that they are renovations of that of which we have lost all previous trace, supposing such ever to have been in previous existence.

In concluding his observations "on what may be considered as the leading incidents connected with the origin of spectral impressions," Dr. Hibbert draws this inference, "that apparitions are nothing more than morbid symptoms, which are indicative of an intense excitement of the renovated feelings of the being*." Before this sweeping conclusion can be admitted, common reason will require a better and more copious explanation of some of those well authenticated apparitions on record.

It would certainly be unreasonable to expect from Dr. Hibbert, or from any other writer, on the subject, any serious and "marked attention to the bugbears of popular superstition †;" but, undoubtedly, the relations of credible historians powerfully demand something more than a futile reference to the doctrines of chance, to prove them only "fortunate coincidences;" or the still more feeble attempts to throw a veil of "successful ridicule" over important phenomena, demanding our

* *Vide* p. 342, first edit., or p. 375, second edit.

† *Ib.* p. 349. first edit., or 381, second edit.

most serious consideration ; the narratives of which “ cannot,” says Dr. Ferriar, “ be refused credit, without removing all limits and supports of human testimony*.”

Vide Ferriar's Essay, p. 137.

CHAPTER X.

General belief in Apparitions or Supernatural Appearances.

“Leibnitz supposes a pre-established harmony between soul and body, the latter being always disposed to act when the former wills.”

BUCKE.

“The (mental) desire to perform a particular action will produce the corresponding motion of the limbs; joy produces a pleasing cast of countenance; fear excites trembling; and horror distortion.”

DR. L. CARPENTER.

It has been observed, that, according to the theory promulgated in the Philosophy of Apparitions, our existence consists only of sensations, divided into sensations present and sensations past, arising from material action alone in various states.—On the other hand, it has been assumed, that it is more consonant to reason, and the test of our own feelings, to believe that our existence is of a compound nature, being both spiritual and material; thus, combining sensations, as concerns the material body, and ideas, or mental perceptions, as relates to the spiritual mind: the former depending solely on the agency of the corporeal organs; the latter on

mental conceptions ; but, while in connection with the mental body, submissive to the effects of sensations from the action of material objects, yet capable of mental enjoyment and spiritual communications.

Furthermore, it has been endeavoured to investigate how far this theory of Dr. Hibbert is applicable in the duly accounting for certain appearances commonly termed apparitions, or spectral scenes ; or, whether such phenomena may not more reasonably be regarded as the result, as well as afford evidence, of our combined spiritual and material nature. In the pursuit of this inquiry, as far as the subject, with a due regard to its importance, would admit, all arguments of a metaphysical description have been avoided, in order to confine the discussion to a reasoning founded upon what may be properly considered the self-evident facts arising from the best authenticated evidence.

Having hitherto limited the observations and remarks to such relations as were more particularly noticed in Dr. Hibbert's interesting work, it will now be further requisite to extend the view of this very interesting subject, by reverting to some other similar narratives, tending to support the opinions advanced in opposition to the before-mentioned theory ; previously to which, some further observations may not be inappropriate.

The general belief,—general as respects both time and space, from the most early ages of mankind, as far as traditionary evidence extends, even unto our own days, and in all known parts of the habitable world,—the general belief has been in favour of supernatural appearances. And although, in the long lapse of many generations, much superstition and over-credulity has frequently, as may well be conceived, from the peculiar nature of the subject, resulted from an overweening fondness for whatever partakes of the marvellous, yet it will be allowed, that this very universality of belief, this proneness to give ear to concerns relating to the essence of our superior nature, must be admitted as a strong presumptive argument in its support. Neither can it be considered as very extraordinary, that at various times the reveries of a disturbed imagination,—those real phantasies of the mind,—should have been detailed as supposed spectral illusions; still less is it to be wondered at, that the artful designs of fraud and cunning, ever prompt to embrace any opportunity of promoting selfish and interested views, should have contributed to bring the more serious and authentic relations into doubtful repute.

But it has been observed, that this general belief in supernatural appearances may as probably have arisen from the early recurrence of past feelings re-

novated in the infancy of human existence, as from actual apparitions or spectral scenes. And such, it may be presumed, is the opinion of Dr. Hibbert; for "it is certain," says he*, "that a belief in an existence after death has, from time immemorial, prevailed in countries, to which the knowledge of the Gospel never could have extended, as among certain tribes of America. Can, then, this notion have been intuitively suggested? or is it an extravagant supposition, that the belief might have often arisen from those spectral illusions, to which men in every age, from the occasional influence of morbid causes, must have been subject? And what would be the natural self-persuasion, if a savage saw before him the apparition of a departed friend or acquaintance, endowed with the semblance of life, with motion, and with signs of mental intelligence, perhaps even holding a converse with him? Assuredly, the conviction would scarcely fail to arise of an existence after death. The pages of history attest this fact:

' If ancestry can be in aught believ'd,
Descending spirits have convers'd with man,
And told him secrets of the world unknown.' "

Thus far from "The Philosophy of Apparitions; or, an Attempt to trace such Illusions to their Physical Causes." And the whole passage, concluding with the poetical quotation, is here extracted, that

* Phil. App. p. 157, first edit., or 193, second edit.

the fallacy of such arguments may be the more apparent.

Presumptuous and incredible as it may appear, it is, in fact, here assumed as a credible, and even a probable idea, that, in the primary generations of created humanity, their omnipotent and all-perfect Maker caused his creatures, through the medium of a morbid temperament, to be deceived with false appearances, in order to induce a belief of an existence after death! and the illusive semblance, though produced by morbid causes, is perfectly true to nature; "endowed with the semblance of life, with motion, and with signs of mental intelligence, perhaps even holding a converse." What is the meaning, what the effect of morbidity? a moribund state of the system may, and does, frequently induce strange fantasies; but that the close unerring resemblance, the real identity of a departed friend, can proceed from that same cause whose tendency is distortion and illusion, is something beyond the powers of common credulity to digest.—"The pages of history attest" the contrary! since,

"If ancestry can be in aught believ'd,
Descending spirits *have* convers'd with man,
And *told him secrets* of the world unknown*."

* That the belief of the existence after death "might have often arisen from those spectral illusions, to which men in every age, from the occasional influence of morbid causes, must have been subject," that is to say, that such illusions first gave rise to such belief, and thence

But this objection, allowing its utmost latitude, would only reduce the argument to a balance of probabilities. It is, however, not admissible, except only on the bare supposition of the *impossibility* of supernatural intercourse. And if it can be proved, or only fairly presumed, that in the early stage of mankind such appearances, or communications, actually occurred, *the impossibility ceases*; and reason alone will, independent of more weighty evidence, afford a light sufficient to guide us in the inquiry. We shall readily discern the very evident probability of the general spread and diffusion of such belief, during the gradual increase, and consequent dispersion of an extended population. That the best-founded narrations should, in course of time, become blended and confounded with the superstitions of fallible humanity, and the delusive inventions of simplicity and deceit, is a circumstance so in keeping with the errors of human nature, as to occasion but little surprise at the result.

That spiritual communications were permitted and did actually take place in early days, we are bound to believe, both from tradition, and from revelation,

gradually transmitted and accumulated from generation to generation, is about as probable a supposition, as, that the material form and powers of man have attained their present perfection, by a gradatory process of improvement from some conglomeration of primary atoms: a position so completely refuted by Dr. Paley, that to say more on the subject would be an insult to the reasoning faculties.

and, were it requisite, it might be added from reason also. For what can be more consonant to reason than to believe, that, in the first stage of created beings, some degree of intercourse, some communication between kindred spirits, would be in operation? That such communications have been,—exclusive of those recorded in the sacred writings,—scepticism itself would scarcely venture to deny; “For,” says a reverend divine*, “the evidence of testimony may be so strong, that the supposition of its falseness would be more incredible than any position, not clearly false or impossible, which it may be adduced to prove.” And, as was before observed, there is no sufficient reason, no conclusive argument that can be brought against the possibility of a recurrence of that which has been previously in operation. Admit the possibility, and the field is open to further discussion, in which, perhaps, it may appear, that “the dreams of a theorist are of little authority †.”

“There are no people,” says Dr. Johnson, “rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion,” says he, “can become universal only by its truth.” This remark is justly grounded on the result of general research; and though the lexicographer has been

* Dr. Carpenter.

† Idem.



accused of superstition and an over-credulous belief in supernatural concerns, yet it is also equally certain, that he did not place an implicit and indiscriminate reliance on popular tales of this description; since, at least, in one well-known instance of fraudulent deception, he was the principal means of detecting the imposture.

But whatever the bent of Johnson's disposition, the remark is worthy our most serious attention; being fully justified by the traditionary history of all nations, from the aborigines of uncultivated savage existence, to the congregated civilization of polished society. And notwithstanding that such traditions have, in some measure, unavoidably become strangely disguised and mixed up with the errors and superstitions of various ages and countries; nevertheless, if judiciously investigated, were it within our power so to do,—they most probably would exhibit traces of one common origin, derived from the fountain head of all sublunary events;

Through numbered ages which their race have run.—PARNEL.

It is a strong and forcible remark, that “it cannot be shown that the brightest gleams of knowledge have, at any time, been sufficient to drive them out of the world.”

Nor need we long be at a loss, when carefully inspecting the stream of historical events, to discover sufficient cause to account for the aberration-

and desertion of original institutions. This must, from the very constitution of mankind and of the world we inhabit, ever be a natural consequence; unless, when, as in certain peculiar dispensations, they are evidently under an especial protection of a controlling providence. Why other nations, or branches of the human race, have been permitted to fall into the errors of superstition and legendary fable, is foreign to the present discussion; but so it is; and where a succession of similar events are supported by corroborating evidence in one continuous flow, even down to our own times, we are most certainly warranted in a belief, superior to that of a theory founded on material sensations; namely, a reasonable belief of a mental perception, of the possibility of spiritual communications.

It is hoped that nothing inserted in the present essay may be, in any way, considered as tending to even a remote reflection of scepticism, as commonly understood, on the author of the 'Philosophy of Apparitions.' Far be such construction from any observations which may have been judged necessary in the endeavour to place the subject in a correct point of view. It must, notwithstanding, be maintained, that Dr. Hibbert cannot be justified in certain conclusions deduced from the evidence he has brought forward to sustain them.

“Apparitions,” says Dr. Hibbert, “are nothing

more than morbid symptoms*;" and with reference to the apostolic age he asserts, that since that period, "they ought to be regarded in no other light than as a pathological case †;" and more than this, "that all such alleged visitants, as they stand recorded in profane history, are illusory, I," says he, "must decidedly maintain ‡," whether before, during, or subsequent to the times of the Apostles! How then accounted for? "I believe," says Dr. Hibbert, "that no apparitions of profane history were ever seen under any such (healthy) circumstances, but that they have universally arisen from morbid causes §;" and elsewhere, he thus unhesitatingly expresses his sentiments, "there will be no hesitation on my part to proceed on the hypothesis; that all the subsequent visitations of this nature which have been recorded, deserve a medical rather than a theological investigation||." Dr. Ferriar, who by his essays appears to have afforded the groundwork of the 'Philosophy of Apparitions,' is assuredly much more consistent when he says, "I conceive that the unaffected accounts of spectral visions should engage the attention of the philosophers, as well as the physicians. Instead of regarding these stories with the horror of the vulgar, or the disdain of the sceptic, we should examine them

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 342—375.

‡ Ib., 111—155.

§ Ib., 105—150.

† Ib., 87—137.

|| Ib., 87—137.

accurately * ;” thus, with highly laudable caution, not venturing too rashly to discredit the verity of those relations which may be entitled to serious considerations. “But in the present age,” says Dugald Stewart, “unlimited scepticism is as much the child of imbecility, as implicit credulity.”

And why should these mysterious appearances be confined to only a medical investigation? What is Dr. Hibbert’s opinion of the relative difference between spirit and matter, between mental perceptions and corporeal sensation? Is it that the spirit is quiescent, till acted upon by organic sensation; are they mutually dependent, or are they identified together? “Every mental feeling,” says he, adopting Dr. Brown’s view, “is only the mind itself existing in a certain state †.”—But if *sensations* are states of the mind induced by objects *actually present*, and acting upon the organs of sense ‡;” and, according to the hypothesis, there are no mental feelings but what arise from sensations present, or sensations past, renovated;—the inference must certainly be, that every state of the mind, every mental feeling, which is thus acknowledged to be the mind itself, is dependent on organic structure.

If here by the mind—(the aggregate faculties of

* *Vide* Dr. Ferriar’s Essay, p. 138.

† Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 10—62.

‡ lb. p. 215—274.

the soul)—is meant to be expressed, the immaterial principle of our nature, denominated spirit or soul,—it is unquestionably an erroneous and too limited conception of its nature and operation. The mind or spirit, being in its essence far superior to corporeal structure, must, reasoning analogically in its temporary connexion with the material body, have the controlling power in effect, if not always in operation. And although, while thus intimately connected, certain states of the mind may be more or less affected by sensations, it does not from thence follow, that sensations being states of the mind are the mind itself; nor that the mind can be identified only by sensations. It might, with equal consistency, be maintained that the fetters which confine the body, are the body itself. It is true, the body is, for the time, suffering under or subject to the impressions of these fetters; but it is equally obvious, that though bound by, it is not identified with, them, nor thereby rendered incapable of other independent operations, over which their effects are as powerless as the tortured body over the free spirit of the suffering martyr*. A more enlarged view of the subject may enable us to look beyond a mere superficial glance in the endeavour,—not to account for, but,—to prove the *possibility* of

* "Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled."—MILTON.

those appearances usually denominated apparitions, and which *may be* mental communications of a spiritual nature.

The opinion, that the mind is all subservient to, and identified with, the sensations of the corporeal organs in their various susceptibilities of outward impressions, is erroneous. For though sensations, pleasurable or painful, may frequently arise from that peculiar state of the circulating fluids which is produced by a healthy or morbid state, by fever, or by other operating causes, yet upon due reflection, it will be found that the deduction is only an apparent result, the reverse being nearer the actual truth, as will be presently explained.

It is a well-known constantly-recurring fact, that fever, nervous affections, corrupt state of the blood, and perhaps other diseases, are often produced, always augmented, by the influence of pure mental feelings; while, on the other hand, a super-healthy state, joyous exhilaration, and the like, counteracting, nay at times almost defying, the ills of mortal sufferance, are the result of the same mental affections. Nor is it less evident that our daily appetites, our constant corporeal enjoyments, are also under the powerful influence of the mind. Thus our relish or distaste for food is, in a very great degree, under its control. No one but must have been repeatedly sensible, that in a gloomy tempera-

ment arising from disappointment, from unabated sorrow, or distress of mind, we lose all relish for, we loath our food. The choicest viands are rejected with a mental feeling of their powerless influence; whereas a spirit of cheerfulness, and a mind at ease, give a zest to the homely fare of content, which the luxuries of anxiety may labour in vain to procure. Thus the masterly delineator of the workings of the mind,—our unrivalled Shakespeare,—makes Henry VIII. taunt the crest-fallen Cardinal, when, in dismissing Wolsey from his presence, he tells him to

“read o’er this
And after this; and then to breakfast
With what appetite you have.”

There is even great probability that our digestive organs are under a similar influence, and that in many contagious disorders, the mind, from fearful apprehension or well-grounded confidence, may exert a more powerful control than is generally conceived: else, why do medical practitioners escape contagion? Is it not by mental perception of their safety, founded upon that experience, the want of which produces in others a mental apprehension, inducing a morbid tone in the system, rendering it peculiarly susceptible to the insidious attack? There can certainly be no hesitation in affirming, that the degree of enjoyment, in every corporeal sense, must

and does at all times greatly depend upon the hilarity or depression of the mind. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bones *." It was, therefore, the opinion of the wisest of the sons of men, that the operation of matter is under the influence of the spirit.

That the mind is subservient to the corporeal senses is, therefore, only an apparent fact. It uses them as the medium, or instruments of intercourse with the material world; and it is from this that the apparent anomaly arises. And, in fact, what but something apparently similar to sensations can impress mental ideas of the external sense being acted upon, and, as it were, clothe them to perception?

In pursuing a chain of ideas in search of arguments to support a novel and favourite theory, it is more than probable, that Dr. Hibbert has confined his operating causes and effects too much to corporeal matter, or the mechanism of animal activity. Material sensations may possess a certain portion of intellect, which intellect, to a limited degree, is probably subject to the influence of renovated sensations. But though the analogy may be allowed as regards the corporeal structure of human nature, yet it is requisite to be duly cautious, before we thence deny the possibility of mental association

* Proverbs xvii. 22.

with other immaterial beings ; lest we lose sight of our own spiritual nature in thus confounding, instead of simply connecting, the two essential principles of our superior existence. “ For,” says an eminent writer of the present day *, “ there is this difference between intellect in man, and the rest of the animal creation. Their intellect teaches them to follow the lead of their senses, and make such use of the external world, as their appetites or instincts incline them to,—and *this is their wisdom* ; while the intellect of man, being associated with an *immortal* principle, and being in *connexion* with a world above that which his senses reveal to him, can, by aid derived from heaven, *control* those senses, and bring under his instinctive appetites, so as to render them obedient to the *Τὸ ἡγεμονικόν*, or governing power of his nature: AND THIS IS HIS WISDOM:” and Cuvier observes, that, “ although animals may be taught by their own confined observation, or under the tuition of man, yet it is only to a very limited extent. Man’s progress in knowledge is unbounded ;” evidently meaning, that the material powers are of limited extent, while mental or spiritual nature is of unbounded capacity.

* Rev. William Kirby.

CHAPTER XI.

On Second Sight.

“ To a philosopher, no circumstance, however trifling, is too minute; he finds instruction and entertainment in occurrences, which are passed over by the rest of mankind as low, trite, and indifferent; it is from the number of these particulars, which to many appear insignificant, that he is at last enabled to form general conclusions.”—GOLDSMITH.

THERE are yet two other descriptions of “fortunate coincidences,” which cannot consistently be passed over without notice in a work of this nature. These, though they could not properly be introduced into the preceding discussion, are, nevertheless, sufficiently interesting, and of themselves too remarkable to warrant a total silence respecting them.

The peculiar phenomena commonly termed second sight, and certain mental forebodings of approaching dissolution, not however precisely marked as to time or place, are the subjects alluded to.

In regard to the former, whatever may be the opinions formed relative to such very singular precognition of approaching events, whatever the

result of their investigation;—it is a fact which cannot be disproved, that many instances have actually occurred.

It is not at present intended to attempt an explanation of these very “fortunate coincidences,”—but it is intended to maintain, that up to the present day, no sufficient elucidation, no satisfactory hypothesis on the subject, nor indeed any approximation to one, has yet appeared. Whether these mysterious events may be within the possible range of mental communications, it is not presumed to decide; mental perceptions they certainly are; and the facts, as they have taken place, must arise in some way,—cause must exist before effect can be produced.

The two following instances are inserted in the appendix to the ‘Philosophy of Apparitions,’ and are sufficiently illustrative of the subject. It may be necessary to premise, that Dr. Hibbert seems disposed to class these phenomena with those of guardian spirits; as he observes, “To another description of apparitions I shall now advert, only because it escaped my attention while treating of the illusions connected with the notions entertained on the subject of guardian spirits*.”

“It is said,” says Dr. Hibbert †, “in one of the

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 395.

† Ibid. p. 396, first edit., or p. 215, second edit.

numerous illustrations which have been given of this faculty, that Sir Norman Mac-Leod, who has his residence in the isle of Bernera, which lies between the isle of North Uist and Harries, went to the Isle of Skye about business, without appointing any time for his return: his servants, in his absence, being altogether in the large hall at night, one of them, who had been accustomed to see the second-sight, told the rest they must remove, for they would have abundance of other company that night. One of his fellow-servants answered, that there was very little appearance of that, and if he had seen any vision of company, it was not likely to be accomplished this night; but the seer insisted upon it that it was. They continued to argue the improbability of it because of the darkness of the night, and the danger of coming through the rocks that lie round the isle; but within an hour after, one of Sir Norman's men came to the house, bidding them provide lights, &c. for his master had newly landed."

The other, inserted at page 452*, is copied from Dr. Ferriar's Essay †, and is as follows:—

"A gentleman connected," says Dr. Ferriar, "with my family, an officer in the army, *and cer-*

* Second edit. p. 462.

† Vide Ferriar's Essay, p. 64—67.

*tainly addicted to no superstition**, was quartered, early in life, in the middle of the last century, near the castle of a gentleman in the north of Scotland, who was supposed to possess the second sight. Strange rumours were afloat respecting the old chieftain. He had spoken to an apparition, which ran along the battlements of the house, and had never been cheerful afterwards. His prophetic visions excited surprise, even in that region of credulity; and his retired habits favoured the popular opinion. My friend assured me, that one day, while he was reading a play to the ladies of the family, the chief, who had been walking across the room, stopped suddenly and assumed the look of a seer. He rang the bell, and ordered the groom to saddle a horse, to proceed immediately to a seat in the neighbourhood, and to inquire after the health of Lady ——. If the account was favourable, he then directed him to call at

* Dr. Hibbert, in a note at p. 462, second edit. observes, that “Dr. Ferriar might, with much advantage, have spared the remark, which,” says he, “I have inserted in italics;” and yet he has previously complained, when speaking of the appearance to Lord Balcarras (*b*), that, “regarding this, and other stories of the kind, however authentic they may be, the most interesting particulars are suppressed. Of the state of Lord Balcarras’s health at the time, it has not been deemed necessary that a syllable should transpire.” In all probability, however, this was unintentionally *omitted*, and *not suppressed*. But here, because a most important feature is very properly noticed by Dr. Farriar, *the remark might have been spared*. —Why?

(*b*) Vide p. 168, second edit. 231.

another castle, to ask after another lady whom he named.

“ The reader immediately closed his book, and declared that he would not proceed till these abrupt orders were explained, as he was confident that they were produced by the second sight. The chief was very unwilling to explain himself; but at length he owned, that the door had appeared to open, and that a little woman, without a head, had entered the room; that the apparition indicated the death of some person of his acquaintance; and the only two persons who resembled the figure, were those ladies after whose health he had sent to inquire.

“ A few hours afterwards the servant returned, with an account that one of the ladies had died of an apoplectic fit, about the time when the vision appeared.

“ At another time, the chief was confined to his bed, by indisposition, and my friend was reading to him in a stormy winter-night, while the fishing-boat belonging to the castle was at sea. The old gentleman repeatedly expressed much anxiety respecting his people; and at last exclaimed, ‘ My boat is lost!’ The colonel replied, ‘ How do you know it, Sir?’—He was answered, ‘ I see two of the boatmen bringing in the third drowned, all dripping wet, and laying him down close beside your chair.’

The chair was shifted with great precipitation ; in the course of the night the fishermen returned with the corpse of one of the boatmen."

This so singularly corroborative, and well-substantiated proof of the actual occurrence of such extraordinary perceptions, is thus related, by an erudite and scientific professional gentleman, and moreover, the author of ' An Essay towards a Theory of Apparitions,' the tendency of which is, certainly, to account for such appearances by any other than supernatural means ; and, consequently, the more entitled to serious consideration is his relation of such singular events. Nevertheless, without any, the least attempt, to qualify or account for these " fortuitous coincidences," Dr. Hibbert dismisses the narrative with the very brief observation, that " it is perhaps to be lamented, that such narratives as these should have been *seriously* quoted (inserted) in Dr. Ferriar's philosophic work on apparitions *." Why to be lamented ? unless as proving more than is desirable by the upholders of the theory ? To disprove them, if possible, were a more forcible method of proceeding. Something on this head is, however, quoted † from Dr. Brown's fanciful—(for such they really are)—opinions on the nature of second sight. The whole passage is

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 453—463.

† Ibid., p. 422—35.

here given, as affording an example of the absurd lengths to which some metaphysicians will go in the service of incredulity respecting stubborn facts, whenever such facts may appear to militate against a favourite theory.

“What brighter colours,” it is observed, “the *fears of superstition* give to the dim objects perceived in twilight; the inhabitants of the village who have to pass the churchyard at any late hour, and the little students of ballad-lore, who have carried with them from the nursery, many tales which they almost tremble to remember, know well.” These, however, be it kept in recollection, are only of the class of those optical illusions fully explained in a preceding chapter. “And,” continues the author, “in the second sight of this northern part of the island, there can be no doubt that the objects which the seers conceive themselves to behold, are truly more vivid as conceptions than, but for the superstition and the melancholy character of the natives which harmonize with the objects of this foresight, they would have been; and that this is in consequence of this brightening effect of the emotion, as *concurring with the dim and shadowy objects* which the vapoury atmosphere of our lakes and valleys presents, that *fancy, relatively to the individual, becomes a temporary reality.* The *gifted eye,*

which has once believed itself favoured with a view of the future, will, of course, ever after have a *quicker foresight*, and more frequent revelations; its own wilder emotion communicating still more vivid forms and colours to the objects which it dimly perceives.”

Thus it must be supposed, that Sir Norman MacLeod’s servant steadfastly looked upon the *vapoury atmosphere*, till some *brightening effect* in his mind’s eye conjured up the verisimilitude of his master, attended with abundance of company! Unfortunately for this futile way of solving the difficulty, the seer happened, at the time it occurred, to be with his fellows in the hall! and where, no doubt, a good fire and good baronial cheer would have the *brightening effect* of dispersing all *vapoury atmosphere* incidental only to “*lakes and valleys*,” and thus this fanciful and superficial hypothesis vanishes into air, “into thin air*.”

Dr. Hibbert certainly, though perhaps not intentionally, misuses terms to suit the bearing of his own view of these phenomena. Thus, in speaking of

* “By pretension to second sight, no profit was ever sought or gained. It is an involuntary affection, in which neither hope nor fear are known to have any part. Those who profess to feel it do not boast of it as a privilege, nor are considered by others as advantageously distinguished. They have no temptation to feign, and their hearers have no motive to encourage the imposture.”—*Vide* ‘Encyclopedia Britannica,’ 3rd edit. 1797, Article ‘SECOND-SIGHT.’

the spectral impressions of Nicolai, he observes*, "The objects of his *second sight* were all of the most familiar kind;" but the objects of that peculiar faculty, which is termed second sight, are a sort of instinctive impression, or mental perception, of circumstances in actual progress, or about to happen; whereas Nicolai's "waking visions" have no relation whatever to such semi-prophetic scenes; and without a due distinction of relative terms, progress in any investigation must be delusive and uncertain.

The mental forebodings, spoken of above, will be the object of consideration in the following chapter.

* Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 90—133.

CHAPTER XII.

Presentiments.

“ And where you can't unriddle, learn to trust.”

DR. PARNELL.

THE other class of incidents alluded to in the preceding chapter, though perhaps, strictly speaking, not of a supernatural description; yet involve some interesting phenomena in their progress, which may be a source of not unprofitable contemplation. At any rate, they appear to have that sort of relative claim to consideration, which precludes their entire omission.

There are many instances on record, of certain strong presentiments in the minds of individuals, which have preceded events of after occurrence in a manner too remarkable to escape notice. These, however, being not altogether the effects of supernatural warnings, cannot, perhaps, be considered in the light of spiritual communications; though they may very well come under the denomination of mental perceptions. Whether these may, in any case, have their origin in some undefined mental intelli-

gences, is probably beyond the limited power of the metaphysician to determine.

Two narratives of this description are here inserted, selected chiefly with a view of showing that this division of the subject has not been wholly lost sight off; and, also, from being more interesting in regard to the talented character of the individuals, and the acknowledged publicity of the circumstances attending their occurrence.

In the quarto edition of the genuine works of William Hogarth, edited by John Nichols and George Stevens, will be found* the following highly interesting detail of the rise and progress of that inimitable artist's final effort in graphic illustration:—

“The last year of his life this ingenious artist was principally employed in re-touching his plates, with the assistance of several artists whom he took with him to Chiswick; and, as if he foresaw the close of his labours, a few months before he was seized with the malady which deprived society of one of its greatest ornaments, he proposed to his matchless pencil the work he has entitled ‘*Finis*, or the Tail-piece. The bathos, or manner of sinking in sublime painting, inscribed to the dealers in dark pictures.’ The first idea of this subject is said to have been started in company, while the

* Vol. i. page 382.

convivial glass was circulating round his own table. 'My next undertaking,' says Hogarth, 'shall be the *end of all things!*' 'If that is the case,' replied one of his friends, '*your business, will be finished*; for there will be *an end of the painter.*' 'There *will* so,' answered Hogarth, sighing heavily; 'and, therefore, the sooner my *work is done*, the better.' Accordingly he began the next day, and continued his design with a diligence which seemed to indicate an apprehension (as the report goes) that he should not live till he had completed it. This, however, he did in the most ingenious manner, by grouping everything which could denote the *end of all things*—a broken bottle—an old broom worn to the stump—the butt-end of an old musket—a cracked bell—bow unstrung—a crown tumbled in pieces—towers in ruins—the *sign-post* of a tavern, called *The World's End*, tumbling—the moon in her wane—the map of the globe burning—a gibbet falling, the body gone, and the chain which held it dropping down—Phœbus and his horses dead in the clouds—a vessel wrecked—Time, with his hour-glass and scythe broken; a tobacco-pipe in his mouth, the last whiff of smoke going out—a play book opened, with *exeunt omnes* stamped in the corner—an empty purse—and a statute of bankruptcy taken out against Nature.—'So far so good,' cried Hogarth; 'nothing re-

mains but this,'—taking his pencil in a sort of prophetic fury, and dashing off the similitude of a *Painter's pallet broken*—'Finis,' exclaimed Hogarth; '*the deed is done—all is over.*'—It is remarkable, that he died in about a month after this tail-piece. It is also well known he never again took the pencil in hand*."

The other instance is still more interesting to every kindred feeling of humanity, Intense excitement, and precocious talent early ripened into full maturity, marked the life of Mozart. Life is but a span, and that brief span was scarcely more than half expanded, when a premature grave received the mortal remains of one of the greatest masters of harmony since the days of Handel and Corelli. The events which precluded his death, bear, in some respects, a striking similarity to the preceding; his last, and most feelingly-expressive composition, precluding further effort; and nature, as it were, exhausted by exertion, yielding herself a victim to excitement, thus giving a silent sanction to the semi-prophetic presentiment.

"It might almost seem impossible," says a modern periodical, speaking of the *Requiem*, the last, and confessedly the finest, composition of Mozart; "it might almost seem impossible to resist the be-

* Hogarth died of an aneurism the 26th of October, 1764, aged sixty-seven years.

lief of a supernatural stimulus, which the story, connected with its production, is calculated to engender." This alludes to some singularly impressive circumstances thus detailed in the life of Mozart translated from the French of L. A. C. Bombetl*.

“One day, when he was plunged in a profound reverie, he heard a carriage stop at his door. A stranger was announced, who requested to speak to him. A person was introduced, handsomely dressed, of dignified and impressive manner. ‘I have been commissioned, Sir, by a man of considerable importance, to call upon you.’ ‘Who is he?’ interrupted Mozart.—‘He does not wish to be known.’—‘Well, what does he want?’—‘He has just lost a person whom he tenderly loved, and whose memory will be eternally dear to him. He is desirous of annually commemorating this mournful event by a solemn service, for which he requests you to compose a *requiem*.’ Mozart was forcibly struck by this discourse, by the grave manner in which it was uttered, and by the air of mystery in which the whole was involved. He engaged to write the *requiem*. The stranger continued, ‘Employ all your genius on the work; it is destined for a connoisseur.’—‘So much the better.’—‘What time do you require?’—‘A month.’—

* From the German of M. Schlictegroll.

‘Very well: in a month’s time I shall return. What price do you set on your work?’—‘A hundred ducats.’ The stranger counted them on the table, and disappeared.

“Mozart remained lost in thought some time; he then suddenly called for pen, ink, and paper, and in spite of his wife’s entreaties, began to write. This rage for composition continued several days; he wrote day and night, with an ardour which seemed continually to increase; but his constitution, already in a state of great debility, was unable to support this enthusiasm: one morning, he fell senseless, and was obliged to suspend his work. Two or three days after, his wife sought to divert his mind from the gloomy presages which occupied it: he said to her abruptly, ‘It is certain that I am writing this *requiem* for myself, it will serve for my funeral service:’ nothing could remove this impression from his mind.

“As he went on, he felt his strength diminish from day to day, and the score advanced slowly. The month which he had fixed being expired, the stranger then made his appearance. ‘I have found it impossible,’ said Mozart, ‘to keep my word.’ ‘Do not give yourself any uneasiness,’ replied the stranger; ‘what further time do you require?’—‘Another month. The work has interested me more than I expected, and I have extended it be-

yond what I at first designed.’—‘In that case, it is but just to increase the premium ; here are fifty ducats more.’—‘Sir,’ said Mozart, with increasing astonishment, ‘who then are you?’—‘That is nothing to the purpose ; in a month’s time I shall return.’

“Mozart immediately called one of his servants, and ordered him to follow this extraordinary personage, and find out who he was ; but the man failed for want of skill, and returned without being able to trace him.

“Poor Mozart was thus persuaded that he was no ordinary being, that he had a connexion with the other world, and was sent to announce to him his approaching end. He applied himself with the more ardour to the *requiem*, which he regarded as the most durable monument of his genius. While thus employed, he was seized with the most alarming fainting fits, but the work was at length completed before the expiration of the month. At the time appointed, the stranger returned, but Mozart was no more* !”

* Mozart died before he had completed his thirty-sixth year.

CHAPTER XIII.

Objections considered.

“The world contains nine hundred and seventy-one millions of souls ; Jews, Mahométans, Christians, Pagans. They harmonize scarcely in anything; and yet they all harmonize in this: that let the Deity assume what shape he will ; and let the soul be of whatever nature it may, yet that the soul lives after the present state of existence.”

BUCKE, *on the Beauties, Harmonies, and Sublimities of Nature.*

THE beauty, harmony, and sublimity of nature are perhaps nowhere more forcibly demonstrated as emanating from the Great Author of all, than in this universality of belief, this beautiful and sublime harmony of opinion and sentiment, pervading the whole of the human race—pervading immensity, infinity, eternity. “The hope of immortality,” says Bucke *, “seems indeed to be a reminiscence of heaven. We see nothing in nature superior to MAN; and nothing in man superior to the MIND; which glances over the Universe, as it were, by magic, and plans in moments what the body executes in years.”

In perfect accordance with this harmony of crea-

* Vol. iv. p. 315.

tion, is the evident superiority of spirit over matter; of the immaterial soul over the material body; and, while this is intuitively acknowledged, shall the superior essence, the governing principle of existence, be conceived so bound by the limited laws of material mechanism, as to render it wholly incapable of mental communication with its kindred spirit? Mental perception, reason, revelation, all combine in supporting the probability of supernatural intercourse; while the many well-authenticated relations on record, appear scarcely necessary to lend a corroborating proof, by their occasional occurrence.

Some writers have always considered supernatural appearances as being miraculous interpositions of Divine Providence; and thence have argued, that, as miracles are allowed to have ceased with the Apostolic age, apparitions, or spiritual communications, are no longer permitted; and consequently, that all relations of a similar nature since that period, and without the pale of that influence, are not to be received otherwise, than as fallacious appearances. Before this conclusion can be admitted, the truth of the premises must be established. For this purpose, it will be requisite to inquire, whether supernatural appearances,—that is, mental communications with spiritual nature,—are, if properly defined, to be considered as mira-

culous? or, whether, in fact, this idea of their nature may not, in a great measure, arise from their rarely permitted occurrence; more rare, it may be, from our own disbelief of, and disinclination to, the encountering such scenes? Correctly speaking, a miracle is an event which contravenes the common course of natural operations, as established and maintained by the infinite wisdom of the Creator. Thus, the authors of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* define it as “an effect contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a sensible deviation from the known laws of nature.” Dr. Samuel Clarke calls it “a work effected in a manner different from the common and regular method of Providence:” according to Dr. Priestley, and others, it is “a manifestation of Divine Power;” but this may, with equal justice, be predicated of innumerable operations in this material universe. And as there can be no doubt but that Omnipotence can alter, or suspend, as well as give laws to material action, so this alteration or suspension is that which, in our limited views of Divine Providence, properly constitutes a miracle, as being in the power of Omnipotence alone. Thus, the restoring a body after life is extinct, the instantaneous creation of food, are miracles; being acts of Divine power, and contrary to established laws: so, also, were a limb to be taken off, and another to grow suddenly in its

place, this would, for the like reason, be miraculous. These, however, are widely different from supernatural appearances; which though not in the frequency or ordinary course of the common occurrences of nature, yet do not contravene any of its laws. The being unfrequent does not necessarily constitute a miracle; "no event," says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "can be deemed miraculous merely because it is strange, or even to us unaccountable." Perhaps the appearance of a comet, or meteor, may be as rare, or even more so, in occurrence, as the phenomena of mental communication with departed spirits; yet no one would consider a comet, or meteor, either as a miracle, or as contravening the laws of creation. And as to spectral scenes, we know, or at least we believe, that there are spiritual beings existing in some celestial sphere beyond the scan of our present cognizance; which beings, doubtless, have constant intercourse with others of their own spiritual nature. We also know, or at least we believe, and intuitively perceive, that the immaterial soul is of a like spiritual nature: consequently, it follows that there is in fact nothing in the established laws of creation to prevent occasional communications between such kindred spirits; and that if such intercourse, however infrequent, does actually take place, it is, in a strict sense, in itself no miracle; though it may

be conducive to all the purposes of such, in demonstrating the power, wisdom, and mercies of God, in thus giving us evident proofs of future spiritual existence; of superintending providence, of benign interference in favour of erring humanity.

“That spectres only appear to one person at a time, even though there are more in company, is,” say the writers of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “an objection against the credibility of their appearance, quite insurmountable. How is it possible,” they observe, “that two men of eyesight equally good, directing their eyes to the same spot, should not see so large an object as that of a man or woman at a small distance equally well?”

The position, “that spectres only appear to one person at a time,” is an assertion which does not hold good in all cases, since there are instances on record to the contrary. However, allowing to this “quite insurmountable objection” its fullest latitude; it may, I conceive, be effectually removed upon the principle of our compound nature, our twofold existence, the assumption of which was a primary subject of our consideration. For, as was observed in the Introductory chapter, “material objects being in their very essence totally different from spiritual nature, cannot be perceived but through the material organs of sensation; and though spirit cannot act upon matter, but through

the instrumentality of the material organs, yet spirit can act upon spiritual nature, without the intervention of matter ;” and, therefore, the mind of man may be, at times, so far unfettered, or freed from its material frame, as to be in a state of mental perception of spiritual existences : while others, though present, may be in a very dissimilar state, and totally incapable of the like perceptions. Thence, it must follow, that there may be a possibility of an individual being mentally abstracted from material objects, and susceptible of spiritual impressions, at a time, when others, though present, may be sensible of only material sensations. Whether these spiritual perceptions are, or are not, visionary, is a consideration which has been already discussed ; and, indeed, has no more to do with the present objection, than has the size of the object, man, woman, or aught else of spiritual existence.

The suggestion, that the universal belief in apparitions may possibly have arisen from past feelings renovated in the most early ages of mankind, and that thence they may have been propagated and received so as to produce the very general belief now, and everywhere existing, has already been sufficiently refuted in a preceding chapter *. Indeed, were it a probable idea, “ that the belief

* *Vide* Chap. x.

might often have arisen from those spectral illusions, to which men in every age, from the occasional influence of morbid causes, must have been subject." this, from its very frequency—seeing that the cause must, often occurring, produce like effects—would completely militate against the following equally futile objection.

It has also been maintained, that these appearances are of too rare occurrence to justify a belief in their verity. This is a remark completely at variance with the foregoing opinion, and too unimportant to require further notice than the preceding observation, that many natural phenomena are at least equally uncommon; to doubt the existence of which would be the insanity of ignorance. But thus it is that inconsistency is always apparent in arguments opposed to established facts.

With a better appearance of reason, it may, perhaps, be argued, that as events, in modern times, are as momentous in their effects as important to mankind in general, and to individuals in particular, as those of the olden time, supernatural appearances, or interference, might be expected now, as well as in times past. If, it may be said, they were required in the days of the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Persians, and other heathen nations of antiquity, why not in the invasions and revolutions of modern date?

A very sufficient answer to this plausible objection would perhaps be found in the present state of religious views, and in the sentiments of justice and humanity, everywhere apparent in the general knowledge of the duties of reciprocal benefit. But, it may with great reason be questioned, whether such appearances are actually of less frequent occurrence in modern than in ancient times? It is perhaps difficult to prove either way: but there is certainly a very reasonable presumption in favour of this latter opinion, from what might be considered, if properly investigated, a sort of regular connecting chain of occasional supernatural appearances, from ancient ages to modern times: affording something more than presumptive evidence that they are now, as formerly, in incidental occurrence, and tending, independently of their immediate effects, to "confirm our faith of the existence of spirits, and of the dignity of human nature." Thus we see, that the Hebrew nation, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, and other nations of antiquity, have each their records of such appearances: so also have the Persians, the Grecians, the Romans: to which succeed similar relations of the early Christian martyrs, as Polycarp, Theodorus, and others; and in later days, many instances on record are to be found in various authors; each, and all, tending strongly to confirm the idea of

their never having actually ceased from the time of the creation. Indeed, so far from their having ceased in these latter days, we may even safely aver, that, as far as evidence can be collected, they are apparently in as frequent occurrence now as in other times. And there may even be some, and those too of high importance as to results, which have never been disclosed,—either from a dubious faith in their reality, or from having happened to those who “cherish a spirit of scepticism, from the idea that it denotes the exercise of a superior intellect;” or even to those who, though believing, are yet too sensitive to

“the world’s dread laugh,
Which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn,”

and who are thus driven to concealment, by the fear of ridicule. Indeed, can we be certain that occurrences of this nature may not have, even recently, taken place, in more important events than may be suspected; though the circumstances may have been suppressed, from motives similar, or nearly allied to the preceding?

“To disqualify the senses,” says Dr. Ferriar, “or the veracity of those who witness unusual appearances, is the utmost tyranny of prejudice; yet, who, till within the last fifteen years *, would have dared to assert that stones fell from the clouds?”

* Published in 1813.

Livy had regularly recorded such events, and was ridiculed for supplying those most curious facts, which must otherwise have been lost to natural history." "They forget," says another erudite writer*, "that, for four thousand years, the overflowing of the Nile constituted a problem;—they forget how many centuries were required to unfold the causes of eclipses; the phenomena of the rainbow; the fluctuation of the tides; the circulation of the blood; the propagation of sounds; and the nature of vision." "While their reasoning," says La Harpe, "tears from Misery its consolation; from Virtue its immortality; freezes the bosoms of the good; and renders justice only to the wicked, whom it annihilates."

"Let him study the Heavens through a telescope,
And a grain of sand through a microscope,"

and then say, if spiritual communications have aught more wonderful in their nature; if they have aught in contradiction to the omnivalent laws of creation.

From what has been adduced in accordance with these preliminary remarks, it will not be presuming too much, to assert the possibility of supernatural appearances, of supernatural intercourse. There is nothing in the established laws of creation against it; natural reason offers no solid objection

* Mr. Charles Bucke.

to it; while divine revelation and human record are direct evidences of the highest authority in support of it. Upon this assumption, a few of the more remarkable of these very interesting relations will be inserted at the conclusion of the present volume.

CHAPTER XIV.

Brief Summary.

“ There are objections against a *Plenum*, and against a *Vacuum* ; but one must be true.”

JOHNSON.

A BRIEF summary of the preceding matter may, not inappropriately, introduce the conclusions intended to be from thence deduced. In conformity to which, I shall observe, that, previously to entering upon the discussion, I have endeavoured to define the most correct sense in which certain terms, peculiarly incidental to the proper understanding of the subject, ought to be received. Thus, in the Philosophy of Apparitions,—the definition of an idea, as being nothing more than a past feeling renovated through the organs of corporeal sensation, was found to be too limited, and altogether incompetent to explain the common acceptation of the term,—and, in consequence, the more comprehensive one was proposed, of considering it simply as a mental conception, whether of mental or material origin.

The definition of, or rather the assimilating, the terms apparition, spectral illusion, and phantasm, to an idea, was also found to be objectionable, and, indeed, inadmissible, and clearer views of their proper signification endeavoured to be established. Whence it was assumed, that an apparition was that only which is susceptible of mental perception, and not subject to corporeal proof; illusion being, on the contrary, a visual deception, or misconception of material objects; phantasms being the unreal fancies of the mind.

Following up these preliminary observations, I have briefly explained what I conceive to be the real and essential difference between an optical delusion of the material senses, and the mental perception of a supernatural appearance; which although as widely dissimilar as mind and matter, yet appear not to have been sufficiently discriminated, in the theoretical view entertained by Dr. Hibbert on the subject. Their assumed origin from morbid causes, I have held to be neither conformable to acknowledged facts, nor supported by satisfactory authority.

Having then taken a general view of the compound nature of our present existence, and a brief notice of the hypothesis promulgated in the Philosophy of Apparitions, I have ventured to comment, at some length, on a few of those relations of super-

natural appearances, noticed in that work ; and I have maintained, that Dr. Hibbert's views of them are fallacious and erroneous ; and his arguments, thence deduced, wholly untenable ; the result being in favour of a reasonable belief in the verity of credible and well-authenticated relations.

I have next entered upon Dr. Hibbert's Theory of Existence, and his hypothesis respecting the nature of consciousness, and identity ; discussing the most essential differences between spiritual and corporeal nature ; the states of the mind, and the mind itself ; further, considering this as connected with, and supported by, the understood laws of the association of ideas.

Finally, I have thence offered some observations on the very general and widely extended belief in supernatural appearances, and communications, which I have adduced authority to prove are not, however unusual, strictly speaking, to be considered as miracles ; and of the very evident controlling power of the spiritual mind over the material body.

In the next chapter, I purpose to draw some general conclusions in confirmation of the principles I have been endeavouring to uphold.

CHAPTER XV.

General Conclusions.

“He who at the end of the eighteenth century has brought himself to abandon all his early principles, without discrimination, would probably have been a bigot in the days of the League.”—
ROUSSEAU.

FROM what has been advanced in the preceding chapters, the following conclusions may, I conceive, be reasonably and justly deduced.

That the theory proposed in the *Philosophy of Apparitions*, however novel in idea, and ingenious in its arrangement, is totally inadequate to explain the immediate cause of many well-authenticated relations of supernatural appearances and spiritual communications, which are to be found recorded in the writings of authors of respectability and repute, and who are confessedly, in all other respects, entitled to credit.

That the well-attested relations thus recorded, to the truth of which both Dr. Hibbert and Dr. Ferriar bear testimony, and the results, frequently momentous, connected with phenomena of that description, render them objects of too serious

consideration to be treated with disdain or ridicule; and that they consequently merit, as they have ever met with, the deliberate attention of philosophical as well as theological writers, though there can be no hesitation in admitting,—

That many of the current tales of spectral appearances have undoubtedly arisen from optical deception, from morbid illusions, and it may be, from other natural causes; the various details of which have been much exaggerated in their oral transit, and consequently,—

That all such as evidently bear the impress of superstition, or fraud, are unworthy serious discussion, further than to demonstrate how very materially they must have tended to throw a considerable degree of discredit over all relations of a similar description.

That there is no tenable ground on which to maintain the impossibility of that which has once occurred occurring again; and it therefore follows, that unless the events of the apostolic age are called in question, and much other historical evidence disproved or rejected, it cannot, from reason or analogy, be proved, that supernatural appearances and spiritual communications are impossible; but the contrary.

That as such supernatural appearances and spiritual communications cannot properly be con-

sidered miracles, since a miracle is only that which contravenes the common course of events as established by Infinite Wisdom at the creation, they are thence not of that description of events which are supposed to have ceased since the specific period above mentioned; and the essential difference of the mental and corporeal natures which compound our present state of existence, renders it, therefore, in a very high degree, probable, that there may occasionally be permitted to take place some mental communications usually termed spectral impressions, independent of, and uninfluenced by, the agency of our external organs of sensation, the medium of material intercourse in this lower sphere of our temporal abode.

That, in all rational discussion, it is imperative to yield the balance of argument in favour of that scale which carries the greater weight of probability and presumptive evidence; always supposing that no positive proof is attainable*. And as, in the previous discussion, we have, on the one hand, the *possibility* of that which having once occurred, may again take place; the *probability* arising from our intuitive perception of an essential difference in our mental existence and organic formation;

* "Where we cannot," says Dr. Whately, "answer all objections, we are bound in reason and in candour to adopt the hypothesis which labours under the least." *Vide* 'Elements of Logic,' p. 198.

and what, indeed, in most circumstances, would be considered as *conclusive evidence*, the very general and universally extended belief of every nation and people, from the earliest traceable period; supported by the preponderating testimony of numerous respectable, and, in many instances, indisputable, authorities: whereas, on the other hand, there are only the bare counter-assertion, or unsupported denial of the sceptic; the powerless ridicule of the superficial observer, or the fanciful theories of ingenious philosophical enthusiasts, who, it is much to be lamented, too frequently intent alone on nature and her operations, do not sufficiently advert to the primary cause of all, nor, as should ever be a leading principle, "look up through nature unto nature's God." That therefore the former position, carrying the preponderating evidence in its favour, demands our assent.

That well-attested relations of supernatural appearances and of spiritual communications, of which there is no tenable ground to maintain the impossibility, require to be accounted for: and as Dr. Hibbert's theory, and other similar attempts, are inadequate thereto, we must of necessity refer them to some other cause; and as we must refer them to some other cause, it is to be considered, whether there is a reasonable probability of their arising from the compound nature of our spiritual and

material conformation—against which it has been seen, that there is nothing objectionable in reason or analogy; and as there is a reasonable probability of their arising from the compound nature of our spiritual and material conformation, and no other reasonable explanation is discoverable, “we are bound in reason and in candour” to take the preponderating evidence, of which the result is, a reasonable belief in the permitted mental communication of our spiritual nature, with other spiritual existences, independent of, and excluding the medium or agency of the organic senses of materiality.

In conclusion, I have only to intreat, that whatever may have been advanced, in the endeavour more fully to illustrate this interesting and important subject, may be considered as alluding to the theory under consideration, and not, in any way, as reflecting on the opinions or sentiments of the highly respectable author of the ‘Philosophy of Apparitions,’ of whom I have no further knowledge than that which results from the publicity of his character for skilful discernment and acute research, alike honourable to himself and useful to mankind; and I trust, that should the present effort attract his notice, he may consider it in no other light than as an humble attempt to set important matters on the sure ground of that hope

which "leads us on, nor quits us when we die." May the controversy, if such it can be termed, prove, under a superintending Providence, the means of promoting a just and well-grounded belief in the spiritual nature bestowed upon man by the inscrutable wisdom of his CREATOR !

CHAPTER XVI.

Introductory to some further relations of Supernatural Communications, &c.

“Indiscriminate incredulity is as blind as indiscriminate belief—I may not always succeed, but I certainly endeavour to separate truth from fiction, and neither to impose on my readers nor myself.”

MILNER.

THE very interesting and truly important phenomena of supernatural appearances or spiritual communications, having been proved, in the preceding discussion, to be possible, if not, indeed, probable, it is now purposed to introduce some other relations of that description, accompanied with a few occasional remarks. And since the justest views of credible evidence belong to many such narrations, their authenticity, in such instances, may be considered as incontrovertible; and must forcibly tend to support the opinions, so extensively entertained, in favour of their actual occurrence. And “if,” says a well-known character of recent memory*,

* Wesley.

“but one account of the intercourse of men with separated spirits be admitted, their whole castle in the air (deism, atheism, materialism) falls to the ground;” for otherwise, “seeing, we may see and not perceive, and hearing, we may hear and not understand.”

There are a sufficient number of these relations on record, to render the mere collecting them a matter of no great difficulty. The selection, however, requires a due regard to just discrimination. It is requisite to sift the grain from the chaff, to winnow the more precious corn from the husk, and dust, and defilement adhering; to separate the ore, which contains the genuine metal, from the enveloping mass of heterogeneous matter.

Whether we take the accounts of apparitions properly so called; or of supernatural scenes; or of the precognition of mental perceptions; or of the forewarning of dreams; in either, and in all of these cases, they may (always supposing the well-authenticated instances as the objects of consideration) well be justly regarded as most extraordinary phenomena, arising from some undefinable, some inscrutable laws, of a world superior to this our present material and temporary abode.

In the narrations which are subjoined, I have endeavoured to select the best authenticated, and, viewing the matter in a proper light, as far as prac-

ticable, the most probable relations, as well from their attending circumstances, as from their apparent effects. Error will no doubt arise in the progress of such an undertaking, but I have "certainly endeavoured to separate truth from fiction, and neither to impose on my readers nor myself."

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STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

PART II.

SUPERNATURAL COMMUNICATIONS

IN

ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES.

..... "But, ere long
"More powerful proof shall take the field against thee."

YOUNG, N. 8. l. 817, 818.

THE [illegible]

THE [illegible]

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THE VISION OF POLYCARP.

. " At length
Their ministry performed, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die"

MILTON.

TOWARDS the conclusion of the eleventh chapter of the Philosophy of Apparitions*, it is suggested, that a question may occur, as to the propriety of an inquiry from whence these phenomena arise, being conducted on "the general preconceived supposition, that every well-attested instance, where a communication with apparitions of various kinds is supposed to have been held, ought to be regarded in no other light than as a pathological case?" this is prefaced by an assertion that "the application of the cases brought forward to those popular narratives on the subject of ghosts or demonology, which may be regarded as authentic, is but too plain; while the inference is in no less a degree fatal to the existence of that world of spirits, which superstition has depicted from no other source than its own wild, fallacious, and morbid phantasy."

* *Vide* p. 87, first edit., or p. 137, second edit.

“To any such objection I would,” says Dr. Hibbert, “reply that there is only one line of demarcation, beyond which researches of this kind cannot meet with any application. This is to be found in the pages of sacred history;” and he adds that “we are not warranted to suppose that any direct converse with good or evil spirits has extended beyond the apostolic age.”

With a due regard to such impressions, it might be rather dubious, whether it were consistent to insert the following remarkable vision of one of our early Christian martyrs; which certainly occurred since the period properly called the apostolic age, being towards the end of the second century after the birth of our blessed Saviour: yet as it treads so closely on the times of the Apostles, we may perhaps be justified in giving to it a belief something beyond that which appertains to material sensations alone, of regarding it in some “other light than as a pathological case.” Still, if we admit any relation beyond the limit of the line of demarcation, it will be then hard to say at what point we are to stop. Notwithstanding this, as the relation now about to be inserted is strongly entitled to every degree of credit on a variety of grounds, we shall be under the necessity of admitting that such events have happened on this side the boundary line marked out for our govern-

ment; and thus, if allowed in one instance, others may, if supported by due authority, claim belief also. So that it may be fairly presumed, that, tracing step by step, we shall at last be reduced to the alternative of either disallowing the one, or of admitting the possibility of similar events recurring at later periods, even until our own days.

However the argument may turn, the following circumstances rest on evidence of too high authority to be rejected; and claim admission here, as being closely connected with the subject of discussion in the present work.

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was contemporary with Justin Martyr, and many others who suffered under the Christian persecution, in the early part of the reign of the Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, whose general character, for public and private virtues, gave promise of an administration of justice and clemency, which ought to have inhibited persecution in any shape. A combination of circumstances, uncontrollable by the hand of man, led, however, to events originating in the blind fury of a superstitious people, which even the strong arm of power may sometimes attempt in vain to resist. A brief preliminary notice of the natural causes, which appear to have more immediately led to this early persecution of the Christians in the Roman dominions, may be not unin-

teresting, and tend much to elucidate the attending circumstance.

Marcus Aurelius, the seventeenth Emperor of Rome, is also known by the name or title of Antoninus the philosopher; probably so called after his immediate predecessor, Antoninus Pius. He traced his descent from Numa, and was a prince of virtuous habits and accomplished manners; a philosopher, and versed in the learning of the times: an accumulation of public and private virtues, rarely possessed by any individual, obtained him the love and esteem of all men; unfortunately he had a coadjutor in the government, of a disposition and conduct in the almost opposing extreme. Lucius Verus, the son of Commodus, was a man of ungovernable passions, and very debauched morals. He became associated with Aurelius in the government, in consequence of the will of the Emperor Adrian, who had appointed M. Antoninus the Pious his successor, with the reversion to Aurelius and Verus conjointly; so that on coming to the throne, M. Aurelius found himself, in some measure, under the necessity of choosing L. Verus as his associate. The natural disposition and conduct of the latter might not a little tend to encourage those evils, which the virtues of the former could, perhaps, neither prevent nor control.

During the first years of their united government

which commenced in the year of the Christian era 161, the empire was visited by an extremity of distress rarely experienced. The Romans had not only to contend with numerous warlike assailants, issuing from the uncivilized regions of the north, who even pushed their barbarous hordes into Italy itself; but were, at the same time, suffering under the accumulating horrors resulting from earthquakes and extensive inundations, while swarms of innumerable locusts brought famine and pestilence in their train. It is therefore scarcely to be wondered at, that an irritated, superstitious people, prompted perhaps by the priests of a heathen mythology, should ascribe their overwhelming woes to the effects of a novel religion, spreading with rapid strides throughout the country. Accordingly, we find a fierce and violent persecution of the Christians, as the almost natural result of a prejudiced population, infuriate from distress; and unconscious that they were thereby only rendering themselves more effectual instruments, under providential control, of firmly establishing the faith they sought to extirpate.

It was in the sixth year of Marcus Aurelius, or very near that period, that Polycarp, who had then reached the advanced age of eighty-six years, retired to a village to avoid the persecution going forward at Rome, in all the bitterness of strongly excited

feelings. According to Eusebius, it was here that the singular vision, warning him of the kind of end prepared for his martyrdom, occurred only three days before he was discovered and taken prisoner to the city. It appears that while he was praying, he saw his pillow consumed by fire, and with a prophetic perception, exclaimed, "I must be burned alive!" This is the more remarkable, as that death was not contemplated, it having been intended, in the event of their failing to bend his mind to their will, that he should be destroyed by wild beasts. After this, as he entered the stadium, many are said to have heard a voice from Heaven, "Be strong, Polycarp, and behave yourself like a man." After much controversy, he was, it should appear, from some sudden impulse, condemned to the stake; where, however, it is affirmed, that when the fire was kindled the flames assumed the form of an arch, without touching the victim, which one of the attending officers perceiving, ran his sword into the body of Polycarp; from whence the blood flowed out in such quantities, as to extinguish the fire altogether. Nevertheless, the centurion afterwards rekindled the fire, upon which he put the body of the martyr, and consumed it to ashes.

M. Aurelius appears to have done everything in the power of man to relieve the distresses of the

empire ; but it was not till after the decease of his coadjutor, L. Verus, which took place in the year 169, that his exertions were commensurate with the success they merited. Soon after the death of his colleague, he crossed the Danube with a powerful army, where, however, by the artful manœuvres of the enemy, he was unwarily drawn into an ambuscade, without any apparent means of escape. Here, reduced by fatigue, rendered unusually severe by heat and thirst, to the brink of despair, their fate appeared inevitable. They were, however, relieved from their perilous situation in a way, singularly manifesting the overruling hand of a Divine providence in the affairs of man. Suddenly dense heavy clouds arose, and a copious fall of rain revived the drooping spirits of the troops, who are described as holding up their open mouths to receive the invigorating shower ; while at the same moment, wind, thunder, lightning, and hail were fiercely driven in the faces of their enemies. Their dormant energies being thus renovated by, what to them appeared little less than a miraculous interference in their favour, they fell upon their discomfited opponents, and gained a complete victory.

Various authorities of that period ascribe this their providential deliverance to the prayers of the whole army ; while the Christian writers attribute

it solely to those of the Christian legion, which formed a part—probably a small part—of it. This latter opinion, it might be almost presumed, was the prevailing sentiment of the Emperor himself; since, immediately after the victory, he sent off despatches to the Roman Senate, in favour of the religion of the Christians; and the persecution was in consequence no longer enforced.

SABBACO, KING OF ETHIOPIA AND CON-
QUEROR OF EGYPT.

A.M. 3279.

“ Whoe'er amidst the sons
Of reason, valour, liberty, and virtue
Displays distinguish'd merit, he 's a noble
Of Nature's own creating.”

THOMSON.

UNDER the presumed possibility of supernatural communications, the circumstances recorded of Sabbaco the Ethiopian merit attention.

In those early ages of superstition and fable, much historical fact is so disguised with allegorical relations, that they too frequently wear a strong semblance of fallacious invention. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt, but that a considerable degree of unjustifiable scepticism has been too hastily evinced, in many instances worthy of a more full and deliberate investigation, before the fiat of rejection should be awarded against them. This, and other minor causes, have obviously tended to throw an unmerited discredit over the relations of authors, whose works would otherwise have demanded a

more candid decision on their authenticity. Be this, however, as it may, the events attending this period of Egyptian history are entitled to a certain degree of credit, from their being closely interwoven with indubitable historical facts, and supported by the testimonies of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus.

Sabbaco, or, according to Rollin, Sabachus, king of Ethiopia, is generally supposed to be the identical So of the scriptures, who entered into a league with Hoshea, king of Samaria, against Shalmanezzer king of Assyria, as recorded in the second book of Kings*. He invaded and conquered Egypt, about seven hundred and twenty-five years before the commencement of the Christian era.

Previously to his entering upon this expedition, he is said to have been excited thereto by a dream or vision,—for these terms appear to be sometimes used as synonymous,—Rollin calls it an oracle, but does not give his authority. It is, however, unnecessary here to dwell upon terms not very clearly defined; but it seems to be pretty well ascertained, that he was, in some way, forewarned that he should subdue Egypt, and hold the government of that country for fifty years; and it is certain that this prediction was literally accomplished, even to the fulfilment of the precise period named.

The commencement of his reign was tingured

* Chap. xvii. ver. 4. See also Josephus, book ix. Chap. xiv.

with the barbarity too frequently the characteristic of those times; and the conquered princes of Egypt were sacrificed to victory, probably to security, or some imperious necessity; as the general character of Sabbaco showed a disposition totally averse to such sanguinary proceedings. His government, indeed, was peculiarly distinguished by an uniform élémency, and the most indubitable proofs are on record of his wisdom, piety, and mercy. These attributes, ever inestimable, but never more so than in a sovereign prince and a conqueror, are best demonstrated as his, by the uniform tenor of his reign; during the whole fifty years of which he would never consent to the execution of a criminal, always commuting their punishment into a term of serviceable labour—in which they were most beneficially employed in the erection of public buildings, the excavating canals, and in otherwise improving the country; by which means the cities of Egypt are said to have been rendered even more commodious, and the whole country more flourishing, than under the famed Sesostris.

It is further related, that some time before the expiration of the predicted fifty years, he had another vision, wherein he was admonished that he could not longer hold the sovereignty of Egypt with a due regard to his own safety and happiness, un-

less he would determine upon sacrificing the priests of the country to his own security. This vision is said to have been several times repeated. But such sanguinary measures were abhorrent to the mind of Sabbaco, and, looking upon this warning as a confirmation of his former dreams, he, in consequence of these impressions, at the expiration of the fifty years, actually resigned the kingdom, and retired into his own native Ethiopia.

From the whole sequence of contingent circumstances, taking into consideration the upright character of the individual, it would appear a most improbable conjecture, that those visions or dreams should have been a mere fabrication, invented for the purpose of forwarding the delusive views of ambition and conquest. That they did really occur, is scarcely to be questioned; and the historians who record them are entitled to credit, till the converse can be proved on some better grounds than an unsupported and sceptical assumption of improbability.

It has been objected to the testimony of Herodotus, that his annals contain too many of these visionary relations; and these, added to geographical errors in his works, have given an apparent sanction to a degree of disrepute which has, in consequence, been attached to his statements. But why are these and similar relations not to be

credited? not because they are found in Herodotus or any other author, but merely because a sceptical disposition on the subject prevails at the present day! Can, however, an historian be justified in not recording events as currently reported and believed, because some future generation may choose to conceive them improbable? Suppose some two or three thousand years hence, that the then existing population, or at least the sceptical writers, of Australasia were to affirm it to be an improbable fable, and even argue the impossibility, that an exile banished from sovereignty to an island under surveillance of the legitimate possessors of the kingdom, should make the attempt, and more than that, should succeed in landing upon the proscribed soil, and proceeding uninterruptedly to the capital; and that, almost without followers, he should actually resume the government, while the reigning family simultaneously retire from the scene, and all this with a rapid facility, which a mutual understanding could scarcely have exceeded—Is the chronicler of the present day to omit this in his records, because some future generation may choose to assume, that the whole is too improbable to be other than a fabulous invention, founded on some reports, which they may, to support some novel hypothesis, suppose to have been detailed from time to time, till

the historian has, from their general dissemination, taken them for incontrovertible facts?

With respect to geographical errors, we may well pardon Herodotus, or any other writer,—who, it may be presumed, can take only such accounts as the age affords upon the credit of the authorities of the time,—when we reflect upon the limited knowledge of even the present advanced state of discovery. Look but a few years back to the maps of Africa, and say where an author could safely place a town, a river, a lake, a kingdom, or even a chain of mountains, known to exist under a specific name, all else supposititious. But Herodotus was even on this head correct in many points, even more so than some who wrote long after. Thus, in respect to the Caspian sea, he describes it as an inland sea, not connected with any other, which we now know to be the fact, though Strabo, Pliny, and others, even down to the days of Justinian, held a contrary opinion. Dr. Henderson, in his travels in Southern Russia, Georgia, &c. mentions, that near the junction of the Bog with the Limon of the Dnieper, are yet the remains of the ancient town of Olbiopolis, mentioned by Herodotus and Strabo as a great emporium of commerce; the same writer speaks also of colonies of Najai Tartars, leading a life similar to the Nomadic Scythians described by Herodotus as

spread over the country north of the Mæotis; and that the many immense tumuli scattered over this steppe, made them conclude that it was the identical spot, which Herodotus describes as held sacred by the Scythians as the burial place of their kings. The Chevalier Gamba, French consul at Tefflis, also remarks, that from the mouth of the Terch to Astracan, about two hundred miles of flat sandy deserts, swamps, and morasses, are now just the same as represented by Herodotus.

It is not intended by this digression to say aught in favour of Herodotus, or any other historian, further than that it is not justifiable to reject the authority of any writer, on no other grounds than because the circumstances and events do not happen to fall in with the prevailing opinions of any particular period, which may or may not be in conformity with sound judgment and reason.

The following narration is still more remarkable, as connecting various circumstances of the Jewish and Egyptian nations in their truly eventful progress.

SETHON, KING OF EGYPT, FOREWARNED OF VICTORY.

“Th’ historic Muse,
Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
To latest times.”

COWPER.

WERE it possible to trace traditionary knowledge to its primary source, it would, in most instances, indubitably be found to have a veritable origin; though, in the progress of time, it may degenerate into allegory and fabulous legends. Hence, truth itself may become so blended with fable, as to render their separation a task of no trifling difficulty. There can be but very little doubt that the heathen idols of antiquity, and the more refined Grecian mythology, had their early origin in a purer worship of the Deity, of which, indeed, faint traces yet glimmer through the dense clouds which envelope their religious institutions*.

* Pennant, speaking of Maurice's Indian Antiquities, &c. says, "I must not be silent in respect to the labours of another gentleman, the Rev. T. Maurice, who has written with uncommon success on the wonderful mythology of the Hindu religion, derived most happily the sources of many of its mysteries, and traced their origin, nearly lost in the mist of fable, from the sacred purity of holy writ."

Sethon, on ascending the throne of Egypt, appears to have taken a decided preference in favour of the religious institutions of the country. His great partiality to the priests and ministers of the established worship was not only very detrimental, but gave great offence to the military; whose resentment was carried to that extent, that they refused to march against the Assyrians under Sennacherib, who threatened the invasion of the Egyptian territory. In this emergency it was, that Sethon, himself a priest as well as king, retired into the temple, where it is affirmed that a vision or appearance gave him promise of a complete victory over the Assyrians; a very hazardous prediction, if any delusion were practised, considering the power of Sennacherib, and the mutinous state of the Egyptian army at that period. However that might be, it seems that, upon the strength of the assurance, and in full confidence of its truth and fulfilment, Sethon immediately collected together a promiscuous body of artificers, peasantry, and the like; and, with this heterogeneous and undisciplined army, if such it might be called, marched boldly towards Pelusium, near which place Sennacherib had pitched his camp.

It is affirmed by Herodotus, and we shall see this singularly corroborated by other testimony, that during the first night of the arrival of the Egyptians

at Pelusium, an innumerable number of field rats entered the camp of the Assyrians; and gnawing and destroying their quivers, their bow-strings, their shield straps, rendered them totally unserviceable. Thus unexpectedly foiled in his views on the country of the Egyptians, Sennacherib, and his whole army, immediately retired, pursued by the victorious Sethon.

In memory of this signal interposition of providence, it is recorded, that a stone statue was erected in commemoration of the event, having the figure of a rat in one hand, and in the other this memorable inscription,—

“Let the man who beholds me learn to reverence the Gods.”

Sethon is, with good reason, believed to be the same individual as he who, in the second book of Kings*, is called Tirhakah. Attending circumstances render this opinion highly probable, since it is pretty clear that the same events are recorded of both, or rather of one and the same person under two different names. Whether there may be any corroborative proof in the signification of the two appellations in the Hebrew and Egyptian languages is, perhaps, worth inquiry.

At the period when Sennacherib was intent upon taking possession of Jerusalem, in the reign of “the good Hezekiah,” the Egyptians and Ethiopians

* Chap. xix. ver. 9.

were, if not really in alliance, at least on terms of amity and good faith with the Jews. From the sacred records we learn that "Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up against the cities of Judah and took them*." After this, notwithstanding that Hezekiah paid him a very heavy tribute, he, after receiving it, "went against Jerusalem †." Sennacherib does not appear to have been at that time with the division of his army which was before Jerusalem ; but sends a messenger, charged to denounce, in haughty terms, summary and heavy threats in the event of any resistance on the part of the Jews ; and soon after, "when he heard say of Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, Behold he is come out to fight against thee ‡," he sent a further arrogant and presumptuous defiance to Hezekiah. This was probably while he was yet at Pelusium, whence, after his so singular and unexpected discomfiture, he proceeded to unite his forces for the premeditated attack on Jerusalem. But "the angel of the Lord went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and four score and five thousand ||." Sennacherib retired into his own dominions, where he fell by the hands of his own children.

Josephus, in his history of the Jews, speaks of these occurrences in nearly the same terms ; but is rather more explicit in what relates to the Egyptians:

* Ib. chap. xviii. ver. 13. † v. 17. ‡ Chap. xix. v. 9. || v. 35.

And this historian very evidently records two separate and distinct victories, or rather deliverances, from the apparently overwhelming power of Sennacherib; one, that of the Egyptians, clearly the effect of a superintending providence; the other, that of the Jews in Jerusalem, equally demonstrative of a miraculous interposition of Divine Power.

Sethon is, by Rollin, supposed to be the same as "Senechus, the son of Sabacon or Sual, the Ethiopian, who reigned so long over Egypt*," mentioned by him as his successor. It, however, appears, that Anysis must have intervened; for when Sabbaco subjugated that country, there were, it is probable, different principalities, and, consequently, more than one king or governor; one of whom was this Anysis, who made his escape, and continued in concealment, till the abdication of Sabbaco, when he emerged from his concealment, and again resumed the royal power: but, probably from advanced age, did not long hold the reins of government, and was succeeded by Sethon. The same historian asserts, that when Sennacherib and his host of Assyrians were besieging Jerusalem, the ministers of Hezekiah, fearing the result, and wanting confidence in the promises of the Prophet Isaiah, sent secretly to the Egyptians for succour; but upon what grounds this opinion is formed, is not very clear; as the sacred records do not mention the circumstance, unless

* Vide Rollin's Ancient History, vol. i. p. 91.

some allusions of Sennacherib to their allies may be so considered. Neither does it appear on what authority Rollin further states that, in consequence of this, the united armies of Egypt and Ethiopia marched on to relieve the city, but were defeated by Sennacherib and driven back into Egypt; and that Sethon, thus defeated, invented an account of a prodigy in his favour the better to conceal his disgrace,—a presumption this not at all in accordance with either the real or supposed result of the contest.

Impartially viewed, the facts appear to be nearly as follows:—

Sennacherib with his numerous host of Assyrians, after great and uninterrupted success in subjugating “all the fenced cities of Judah,” most probably formed two divisions of his army; one of which he himself conducted against the Egyptians and encamped at Pelusium; the other division marched, under his generals “Tartan, and P^obsaris, and Rabshakeh,” against Jerusalem; Assyria^s certainting no doubt of the surrender of that city to his armed host, although he might not be so confident of unopposed success in his attempt upon Egypt. While messengers were severally dispatched to and from the besieged city of Jerusalem, Sethon appeared before the Assyrian camp at Pelusium, and, aided by a *providential* interference of *natural causes*,

witnessed the sudden retreat of their discomfited enemies; though it is very likely that Sennacherib, looking upon the circumstances as only an accidental, though unfortunate fortuitous coincidence, did not consider this as a defeat, notwithstanding his being thus disabled from standing the brunt of a battle. He proceeded, therefore, with his followers to join the other division of his army before Jerusalem, only, however, to experience the total destruction of his troops by the *miraculous* power of the destroying angel, in favour of the hitherto despised Jews. Dismay was the result, and retreat the only alternative.

Sethon, says Herodotus, had a vision in the temple of Vulcan, wherein that god assured him of victory over the Assyrians. Divested of the colouring of superstition and fable, incident to those times, it may be conceived that there was either a vision, or perhaps some supernatural appearance,—the possibility of such being granted,—which predicted the result. Else how could Sethon, with his undisciplined followers, have ventured to march against the Assyrian host, under the warlike Sennacherib? There is a very remarkable allusion to the destruction of the implements of war in the Assyrian camp, previously to their being led by Sennacherib against Jerusalem, by the Prophet Isaiah; where he says, “The *king of Assyria* shall not come into the

city, nor *shoot an arrow, nor come before it with a shield**.”

Hezekiah relied, with faith, on the promises made through the Prophet Isaiah.

Sethon trusted firmly in a supernatural assurance of victory.

The whole of the eventful circumstances are too singularly interwoven with sacred and profane history, to be omitted in a work intended to prove the possible occurrence of spiritual communications at various periods.

* 2d of Kings, chap. xix. ver. 32.

ASTYAGES—CAMBYSES—CYRUS.

“ What none can prove a forgery may be true.”—COWPER.

IN the first volume of an eloquent work on the Beauties, Harmonies and Sublimities of Nature*, some interesting circumstances, preceding the appearance of him who transferred the sceptre from the Medes to the Persians, are thus noticed. “ Herodotus relates that Astyages, King of the Medes, having married his daughter to Cambyses the Persian, dreamed one night that a vine springing from the womb of his daughter became so exceedingly umbrageous, that it covered all Asia with its shade. This vine being interpreted to mean a grandson who should supplant him on the throne, Astyages sent for his daughter, and at the time of her delivery gave her child into the care of Harpagus, with strict orders to have it destroyed. The manner of its preservation and the romantic history of Cyrus who fulfilled the prophecy, is in the animated recollection of every classical reader.”

Astyages, supposed to be the Ahasuerus mentioned in the Scriptures, flourished about six hundred years before the birth of our Saviour. From

* See page 77.

the same historian, above referred to, we learn that he had a previous dream, of a similar tendency, before the marriage of his daughter Mandane, and that it was to prevent the accomplishment of this seeming prediction that Astyages united her to a foreigner, Cambyses the Persian, a noble of a peaceable disposition, and, though of an honourable family, still of a rank very far beneath the expectations of a royal daughter of Media. It was after this that the second dream, recited above, induced him to resort to the cruel and unnatural means of destroying the innocent object of his excited jealousy; and which he no doubt believed that he had most effectually accomplished, by intrusting it to the charge of Harpagus, one of his most faithful and obsequious dependants. The heart of Harpagus, however, was not hardened, and he intrusted the hateful commission to another, equally averse to such atrocious infanticide; and thus the innate feeling of compassion in the agents of the tyrant was the providential means of preserving the infant Cyrus to fulfil the great and marvellous designs of Providence.

The testimony of Herodotus has been questioned on account of his having interwoven narratives of this description with what are usually considered as more authentic events; and, in this present instance, some writers have preferred following the

records of Xenophon, who, in his history of Cyrus, rejects, or, more correctly speaking, omits these and other singular details in the life of that renowned character. It has, however, been remarked that Xenophon appears to have had in view the delineating a life, such as ought to constitute perfection in a prince, taking Cyrus for his hero, as the nearest approximating character existing*. And, though Xenophon does not confirm, neither does he contradict, the statements of Herodotus; whose detail, moreover, has been adopted as the best and most correct authority by the great majority of subsequent historians†.

Cyrus was the object of sacred prophecy, even to identity by name,—a high and most remarkable distinction, of which there is but only one other instance on record. Under such indubitable proof of the importance of his eventful life, it can scarcely be deemed as very extraordinary, that some special forewarnings of the birth of so important a character should occur, and occurring be recorded.

* A plan similar to this was adopted by Fenelon in his history of Telemachus.

† As Diodorus, Justin, Strabo, Clemens-Alexandrinus, Justin Martyr, Eusebius, Hierom, Austin, Scaliger, Erasmus, Val. Max. &c. &c.

The Monthly Review, for July 1816, in a critique on a valuable modern publication, observes, that “Rollin treats the romance of Xenophon, entitled *Cyropædia*, as true history; and with still greater want of judgment, he treats as fabulous the sound and trust-worthy information of Herodotus.”

XERXES—HIS EXPEDITION AGAINST THE GRECIANS.

“ See the grand round of Providence’s care,
 “ See realms assisted here, and punished there ;
 “ O’er the just circle cast thy wond’ring eyes,
 “ Thank while you gaze, and study to be wise.”

PARNELL (221.)

AMONG the many remarkable supernatural warnings or apparitions mentioned in profane history, which, judging from the subsequent events, appear of more than ordinary importance to mankind, may be ranked that which is said to have appeared to Xerxes the Persian monarch, previously to his determining upon the memorable Grecian expedition, which took place about four hundred and eighty years before the commencement of the Christian era.

Xerxes, says Rollin*, “ puffed up with his success against the Egyptians, determined to make war against the Grecians.” This invasion of the rights and territories of a free and independent people does not appear to have been the result of aught save an insatiable love of conquest and

* Rollin’s An. Hist., vol. iii. p. 2, and subsequent pages.

inordinate ambition, the wild unwarrantable desire of extending his dominion over the whole known world. This, the retributive bane of all such scourges of the human race, is peculiarly exemplified in Persian history, not one of whose monarchs, of his own accord, ever stopped in the career of conquest. Xerxes appears to have been of a passionate, headstrong disposition, impatient of control, and susceptible of the grossest flattery from the creatures of his will, believing that the very elements were subservient to his mandates, and all nature under his command. And this superlative folly was carried to the almost incredible extent of causing stripes to be inflicted on the ocean for interfering with his projects, writing a letter to Mount Athos to enforce obedience to his orders, and various other ridiculous and profane excesses. His cruelty was great, unjust, and sometimes accompanied with ingratitude, as in his conduct to Pythius, who, though no very estimable character, deserved better at his hands*. His eventful life and character has left an impressive and indelible lesson to futurity. The result of his celebrated attempt upon the independence of Greece fully justifies

* Pythius offered him his accumulated wealth towards the expenses of the war, and when some time afterwards he requested Xerxes not to take from him his son, the tyrant caused the youth to be slain in the presence of his father.

the sentiments of Artabanes, who, in a dissuasive oration against that undertaking, concludes by observing, that “ As God alone is truly great, he is an enemy to pride, and takes pleasure in humbling every thing that exalteth itself: and very often the most numerous armies fly before a handful of men, because he inspires these with courage, and scatters terror among the others.”

Herodotus was born about this period, and growing as it were with the times, the contemporaneous events would readily become known to his diligent research—collecting thus the peculiar facts relative to affairs of such momentous consequence, we may venture to take the circumstances recorded by him as being generally current at that time, and uncontradicted by other authority.

From this source we are informed, that before the undertaking was finally determined upon, the measure had been debated at length in the Persian councils, where, however, not one, except Artabanes, the venerable uncle of the monarch, was found possessed of firmness sufficient to oppose the royal views; though it is more than probable that many were equally averse to the project. After the first hasty ebullition of passion, aroused by unexpected opposition to his will, had passed over, Xerxes had sufficient wisdom—probably arising from some innate respect due to the age and virtues of one

so nearly related as Artabanes, to accede to his advice, and the favourite idea of the invasion of Greece was partly abandoned, till on the following night an apparition appeared to Xerxes, which being repeated, was communicated to Artabanes, who at the particular desire of his royal nephew was induced to take the station of the king, and himself also experienced a similar visionary appearance. This, it is said, completely overcame the objections of Artabanes, and the expedition was in consequence forthwith determined upon.

Xerxes was accompanied by upwards of five millions of followers, and the important results of the war to both Persians and Grecians are too well known to need a repetition here.

REMARKABLE COINCIDENCES IN THE VISIONS
OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT,

AND OF

JADDUS, THE HIGH-PRIEST OF JERUSALEM.

“ Nature has, therefore, implanted in our souls an inextinguishable love of every thing great and exalted, of every thing which appears divine beyond our comprehension.”.....

DION. LONG.

THERE are some simultaneous and remarkable coincidences, attending some part of the career of Alexander of Macedon, which forcibly demand a recital; inasmuch as they are not only in themselves peculiarly worthy of notice, but so blended with, and confirmed by the Jewish records, as to preclude all doubt of their truth.

It is hardly requisite to premise, that, after the defeat of Darius, Alexander having taken Damascus and Sidon, laid siege to Tyre, and sent to Jerusalem for those supplies of which his army then stood in need. The Jews, having bound themselves by oath not to fight against Darius, Jaddus, the high priest of that nation, found himself under the unpleasant necessity of refusing the required aid. In consequence of this, and very

soon after the capture of Tyre, Alexander advanced with hostile views towards Jerusalem. These hostile views were, however, not only prevented, but the tide of affairs so turned in favour of the Jews, owing to the impression made by certain supernatural appearances, either in a vision or dream, that those circumstances alone, were there none other on record, would be sufficient proof of the *possibility* of spiritual communications. The particulars are mentioned in several profane authors, but the record of Josephus is so ample and explicit, as to require nothing more than a literal transcript, to demonstrate the truth of this interesting detail.

“ Jaddus,” says Josephus*, “ being apprised of Alexander’s intention, and that he was marching with all haste to Jerusalem, was greatly alarmed ; and, knowing how incapable he was of making any resistance against so powerful an invader, ordered prayers and sacrifices to be offered up for the general safety and prosperity of the people. On the following night it was revealed to the high priest in a dream, that he should adorn the city with garlands and flowers, open the gates, and let the people, who should be dressed in white, go out to meet Alexander, himself and the other priests preceding in their proper habits. When Jaddus awoke, he was

* Book xi., ch. viii.

so highly pleased with what had been revealed to him in his dream, that having in the morning told the citizens what had passed, he proceeded to make the necessary preparations for meeting the king.

“ As soon as Jaddus heard of the approach of Alexander, he, with the priests and people, left the city, in a solemn procession, and went to a place called Sapha, that is, the place of prospect, from its being so elevated as to command an uninterrupted view of the city and temple.

“ The army of Alexander made no doubt of a speedy conquest, and flattered themselves with reaping great advantages by plundering the city. But in this they soon found themselves mistaken, things taking a very different turn from what they expected. As soon as Alexander saw the people marching in procession, and clothed in white, the priests in silken robes, and the high-priest in purple, embroidered with gold, wearing his mitre, and having on his forehead a golden plate, with the sacred name of the Deity inscribed on it, the majesty of the spectacle struck him with such reverential awe, that he advanced alone, paid homage to the inscription by falling on his knees, and saluted the high-priest himself. So unexpected a circumstance greatly surprised the Jews, who gathered in crowds about Alexander, and, with

loud acclamations proclaimed his praise. The King of Syria, and the great men of Persia, were likewise astonished at his behaviour on this occasion. One of them, named Parmenio, took the liberty to ask him in a familiar way, how it happened that he who was adored almost by the whole earth, should now descend to bow to a priest of the Jews? The reply that Alexander made was this : ‘ That he did not
‘ pay that adoration to him, but to the God whom
‘ he professed to serve. That while he was at
‘ Dion, in Macedonia, and deliberating with him-
‘ self in what manner he should carry on the
‘ Asiatic war, and subdue the Persian empire, that
‘ very person, in that very habit, appeared to him
‘ in a dream, encouraging him to enter boldly in-
‘ the expedition, and not to doubt of success,
‘ because the Almighty would be his guide, and
‘ insure him a conquest : that therefore he made
‘ no doubt of gaining his point in all his under-
‘ takings to his utmost wish, as he made war under
‘ the direction of that Supreme Being, to whom, in
‘ the person of the high-priest, he paid adora-
‘ tion.’

“ After this reply to Parmenio, the king embraced Jaddus, and the other priests escorting him into the city, he went up to the Temple, and there offered sacrifice in form, according to order, paying also a singular veneration to the high-priest,

who shewed him, when the ceremony was over, the book of the prophet Daniel, and, in it, the prediction of the overthrow of the Persian empire by a certain Grecian king, whom Alexander interpreted to be himself."

Subsequently, Alexander granted to the Jews many privileges; and the whole train of events are so strongly evident of "a special providence in the affairs of men," that the bare recital, knowing the circumstances to be authentic, is, in itself, sufficient to warrant the unhesitating belief that those supernatural warnings, whether in dream or vision, did, in both instances, actually occur; but, with the weight of testimony due to the records, it must be indisputable on any ground.

SPECTRAL APPEARANCE TO MARCUS BRUTUS.

“ My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE spectral appearance to Brutus, previous to the march of the army under him and Cassius into Europe, has been a prolific source of argument and inquiry. The account, as given by Plutarch, in his life of that patriotic Roman, is well worth transcribing.

“ When they were about to leave Asia, Brutus (it is said) had an extraordinary apparition. Naturally watchful, sparing in his diet, and assiduous in business, he allowed himself but little time for sleep. In the day he never slept at all, nor in the night till all business was over, and his friends had retired, and left him nobody to converse with. But at this time, involved as he was in the operations of war, and solicitous for the event, he only slumbered a little after supper, and spent the rest of the night in ordering his most urgent affairs. When these were dispatched, he employed himself in reading, till the third watch*, at which time the tribunes

* This was midnight.

and centurions came to him for orders. In this manner, a little before he left Asia, he was sitting alone in his tent, by a dim light and at a late hour. The whole army lay in dead silence, when the general, wrapped in deep meditation, thought he perceived something enter his tent; and, turning towards the door, saw a horrible and monstrous spectre standing stilly by his side. ‘What art thou?’ said he boldly; ‘art thou God or man; and what is thy business with me?’ The spectre answered, ‘I am thy evil genius, Brutus! Thou wilt see me at Philippi.’ To which he calmly replied, ‘I’ll meet thee there.’ As soon as the apparition was gone, he called his servants, who told him they had neither heard any noise, nor seen any vision. That night he did not lie down to rest, but went early in the morning to Cassius, and told him what had happened*.”

It was soon after this that the opposing armies marched into Greece, and contended for victory in the plains of Philippi, where Brutus was rather forced into, than consenting to, the hazard of a general engagement. In the first contest he was victorious, though at the loss of Cassius and a part of his forces; but some days after, a reverse of fortune closed the brilliant career of one of the last and most staunch adherents of the republican go-

* Plutarch, vol. vi. p. 90. (F. Wrangham.)

vernment. "That night, they say, the spectre re-appeared to Brutus, and assumed its former figure, but vanished without speaking."

"The conduct of Brutus," says Goldsmith, "was always perfectly steady. An even gentleness, a noble elevation of sentiment, a strength of mind over which neither vice nor pleasure could have any influence, an inflexible firmness in the defence of justice, composed the character of that great man." "Beloved by the army, doted upon by his friends, and admired by all good men," he seems to have been hurried on, by some irresistible impulse, to his destruction, and that of the party he espoused. Previous to the last decisive contest, the camp of his opponents was in that state which rendered victory to them nearly essential to their existence. Their tents filled with water, and frozen from the severity of the weather; suffering under a scarcity of provisions, and the temporary deprivation of one of their generals, Cæsar being prevented by illness from appearing in the field, and the whole command in consequence devolving upon Anthony. To all which was superadded, the recent defeat of their naval forces. How, then, was it that the patriotic hero, the great and good man, the noble and valiant Brutus was subdued? Before this question can be entered upon, we must look at the numerous resulting circumstances, and they

combine many most important events, claiming serious attention. Meanwhile, be it remembered, that one effect of Cæsar's triumph was the re-establishment of Herod on the throne of Judea.

“ The ways of heaven are dark and intricate ;
Puzzled in mazes, and perplexed with error,
Our understanding traces them in vain,
Lost and bewildered in the fruitless search ;
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.”

ADDISON.

THE MAID OF ORLEANS.

“In vain we ask our reason’s aid.”—ROWE.

THE remarkable chain of circumstances which led to events so highly important to the kingdoms of France and England, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, resulting from the sudden appearance and subsequent conduct of the Maid of Orleans, most indubitably prove that, whatever the primary cause of that extraordinary female’s interference in the military defence of her country, the whole uninterrupted success thereof, and final expulsion of foreign troops from her native land, must be admitted to have resulted from the controlling hand of a powerful providence, principally effected through her agency. In the endeavour to impartially investigate this subject, it will be requisite to enter upon some brief account of this interesting individual, and the more prominent events attending the short period of her brilliant career.

Joan D’Arc was born in Lorraine, in the year 1412, and is said to have been the subject of certain visionary communications, assuring her that she was to be the instrument in the hands of Providence

to expel the English from France, and place the crown upon the head of her own rightful sovereign, Charles, then Dauphin.

At this period, that is, about the year 1425, the English were in possession of Paris, the capital of the kingdom, besides many other places of great importance, together with a very considerable portion of the country, and were then besieging Orleans, and extending their conquests with all the confidence congenial to victorious and successful armies. But it was not till 1429 that Joan D'Arc obtained, with much difficulty, admission to the court of Charles; and even then, it appears, was more indebted to curiosity than any other motive for an interview, being at that period only about seventeen years of age. Previously to her admission, every ensign of royalty had been purposely removed, notwithstanding which, if we may believe the French historians, she promptly distinguished Charles from the surrounding courtiers, and confidently assured him of victory, and the expulsion of the English from his dominions, boldly affirming that the siege of Orleans should be raised, and himself crowned at Rheims, which, it is to be observed, was about eighty leagues distant from their then encampment, the whole of the intervening country in complete possession of the enemy, occupied by hostile armies, and defended by numerous

fortresses and situations of strong defence. Among other corroborative circumstances which she adduced in support of her claim to supernatural inspiration, it is asserted that, at that interview, she revealed to her sovereign some particular secret, known only to himself, and which could only have become known to her by some spiritual communication; besides which, other minor proofs of some peculiar foreknowledge are on record.

It is scarcely requisite to detail the important events which followed; they are in the lively remembrance of every one versed in the history of that period—suffice it, therefore, to notice, as to the two prominent events thus predicted,—that the siege of Orleans was raised, and the town relieved, in May, 1429, and that in the July following Charles was crowned at Rheims. So soon as these two essential objects of her mission were accomplished, she intreated her sovereign's permission to return to her own native village. Unfortunately for her this was peremptorily refused, under an impression that her presence was all important to the successful issue of the contest. The inhuman triumphs, and disgraceful conduct of her enemies, with her untimely and excruciating death, are too well known to require recital here.

In the investigation of this narrative, the first object of inquiry seems to be, that of the character

of the individual claiming belief on the ground of supernatural inspiration, and who, in consequence, can be considered in only two points of view—there is no medium—either she was sincere in her belief of her own spiritual communications, and of unbounded faith in the fulfilment of their predictions ; or she was an artful, consummate hypocrite, and a pliant instrument in the hands of political machiavelists.

If her individual character, and the circumstances attending her eventful life, be considered, with a due regard to each of these positions, it may justly approximate to a conclusion demonstrative of the truth of one and consequent falsehood of the other.

An esteemed and impartial historian of our own times*, of sentiments certainly in nowise accordant with a belief in the supernatural character of her mission, thus speaks of Joan of Arc : “ Her manners,” says he, “ were pure, her life irreproachable ; innocence, piety, candour, generosity, and courage had fixed their abode in the bosom of Joan ;” and he adds, “ the rural life to which she had been ever accustomed had given additional vigour to a habit of body by nature robust, and additional strength to a mind naturally intrepid ;”—thus almost demonstrating an impossibility of in-

* Gifford. Vide “ History of France,” vol. ii. p. 546.

tentional fraud, and a total absence of any morbid affections. In addition to this testimony of an eminent English writer, we find the French Count of Dunois, at a period of thirty years after these events, and "at an age," says Gifford, "equally removed from the thoughtlessness of youth, and the credulity generally attendant on the last stage of life," even in manhood's mature and ripened prime, and when all exaggeration or motive of concealment may be supposed to have ceased with the lapse of time—even then Dunois "affirmed with an oath, that all the actions of this girl, whom he had scarcely ever quitted, bore a supernatural character, the recollection of which would never be erased from his memory." In conclusion, "it is," says he, "worthy of remark, that in all her replies," when under examination, "she appeared wholly exempt from every kind of superstition, even from those which were generally adopted in that credulous age. The only point which savoured of superstition, though, in fact, it was essentially different, was her firm and invariable adherence to her first declaration, that her revelations were not illusive, but real." In a word, every circumstance attending the eventful progress of her brief career, is decidedly corroborative of the character she assumed, and of the mission she so firmly believed herself charged with.

And what were the consequences resulting? Continued and uninterrupted success attended her progress, until the two specific objects of her mission were accomplished. No sooner was Orleans, “the speedy capture of which had been reduced to an almost absolute certainty,” effectually relieved, and the siege raised, than she strenuously urged the proceeding to Rheims, to effect the second important point, the coronation of her sovereign in that city. Notwithstanding that many opinions in council were much averse to this, and strongly advised the following up the defeat of the English, and securing the other parts of the country still open to the enemy, yet Joan prevailed, although “the accomplishment of this project, undertaken in contradiction to all the rules of human prudence, was a matter of such extreme difficulty, that the bare proposal a few weeks before would have been considered as a proof of insanity;” in fact, the distance, the road lined with the English troops, the many strong fortresses, their own army almost literally without pay, and at times nearly destitute of provisions, “The state of uncertainty occasioned by obstacles the most simple and easy to be seen, sufficiently prove that, in forming the plan of this expedition, the king, the generals, and the council had fully relied on miraculous assistance.”

Was she, therefore, sincere in her belief of a

revealed mission to accomplish certain ends for the salvation of her country, and, for aught we know, for the general benefit of mankind? Or was she the ready, artful tool of some machiavelian politicians, who, through the means of her hypocritical conduct and presumptuous fraud, endeavoured to accomplish apparent impossibilities by the most unlikely methods, at the extreme venture of general ruin and disgrace?

“Look on this picture—and on this.”

Many other circumstances might be noticed, as supporting the truth of Joan's pretensions. It has been observed that she unhesitatingly distinguished Charles from the surrounding courtiers. “In vain,” says Gifford, “did the company assure her she was mistaken; she persisted in her assertion that he was the king.” This testimony, given by our erudite historian, carries the greater weight, inasmuch as he appears inclined, when practicable, to scepticism on minor points. Thus, he observes, “As to the secret which it is pretended she revealed to the king, as she never could be prevailed on to disclose it to any other person, and as Charles himself never entered into any explanation on the subject, it must be considered as fabulous,”—that is, it must be considered fabulous, merely because the parties most interested refused to disclose what

may be readily conceived as important to be kept inviolable,—not a very conclusive argument, certainly. In this, as in the case of the Duke of Buckingham, as recorded by Clarendon, it may be fairly presumed that some evidence, beyond that of our own corporeal senses, would be required to obtain full credence and unlimited confidence; and the different results are not a little remarkable. In the latter instance, a supernatural warning was, from being disregarded, followed by its consequent and merited punishment; in the former a submissive, though at first reluctant, attention to a similar interference of a controlling providence, was followed by those important consequences which finally expelled a foreign army from the kingdom.

It is not a little singular to observe with what a searching industry those writers who are sceptical on the subject of supernatural means to accomplish human ends, endeavour to discredit every tendency to account for events in that way, disputing every inch of ground, unstable though it be. Nay, they not unfrequently run into the most frivolous statements, and engender the most improbable conjectures, by way of argument wherewith to account for incontrovertible facts which they cannot disprove, and this sometimes to the most improbable extent, when the one only possible and simple way of solving the apparent difficulty is discredited, for no other

discoverable reason, than that it is not in constant recurrence.

And thus this guileless, highly-favoured maid, of irreproachable life, possessed of innocence, piety, candour, and all the virtues of youthful purity, because she has never disclosed to others the secret revealed to her, for the sole important purpose of gaining credence with her sovereign,—shall have this evident token of verity considered as fabulous.

The instances of her personal resolution and undaunted courage, the result of confidence founded on a firm faith in her mission, are evident throughout. Thus, at the storming of Jargeau, in the very heat of the contest, she addressed the Duke d'Alençon, who, it is probable, was, at least, indecisive in his movements: "Forward, gentle Duke," said Joan, "to the attack! Fear nothing; don't you remember the promise I made to the Duchess, your wife, to bring you back safe and sound?" and he did return unhurt. This, moreover, is one among many proofs that she did not always succeed without a hard struggle for victory; and yet mark the inconsistency of prejudice in argument. In the unceasing succession of arduous conflicts to accomplish the designs of that providence to which she must, let the argument turn which way it may, be considered as the humble instrument, every object being attained, it is thence inferred to be so from

her opponents being panic struck ; or, in other words, that the military refused to stand the brunt of her attacks,—no great meed of praise to the brave English veterans, who had conquered the country they now sought only to defend. But it was not so, as many a hard-fought battle, many a well-contested field will prove. She did, it is true, conquer, but not unopposed, and that Omnipotent power which supported her, gave her the victory.

Finally, if her own words may be credited, “ she had a secret presentiment of the dangers which awaited her.” There can be no doubt that she continued with the army long after the attainment of the objects of her mission ; and it is equally certain that this proceeding was totally against her judgment and inclination, and, in a manner, upon compulsion, but in effect demonstrating her belief that the objects in view being successfully terminated, her mission was at an end ; and one might be almost induced to believe that this act of disobedience to her super-human instructions alone led to the untimely fate of this innocent, though enthusiastic creature, by thus throwing her into the power of a vengeful and merciless enemy.

Gifford, who goes somewhat at length into the detail, does not entertain any idea of political fraud or of collusion in these extraordinary events, though he argues against their supernatural origin and pro-

gress. Other writers, apparently unwilling to provoke discussion on the mysterious and interesting subject, have contented themselves with a bare recital of such of the most prominent facts as could not well be omitted in historical detail, adding some observations tending to discredit the supernatural character of the whole, by impeaching some of the minor particulars, as recorded by Villaret and other French historians. Thus Hume asserts, that the secret above mentioned was told to the king and *others* then present ; that Joan was twenty-seven years old, the French historians having taken ten years off her age, though, as Hume does not quote any authority for his assertions, and we have the records of those times proving the contrary, it must be presumed that he is in error. As little reliance can we place upon the assertion of the same historian, that her acknowledged gracefulness and equestrian excellence in the management of her steed, was owing to her having been accustomed to ride while servant at some country inn. Her unimpeached character is sufficient confutation of this. Hume, however, for this has the authority of Monstrelêt, who, it should be observed, was of the English party, and his evidence is proved to be false, by the Process MS., and seems, indeed, to have had no other foundation than from her having once been, for a fortnight, at an inn, whither she

had been conducted by an uncle. Smollet is even more sceptical on the subject than Hume, styling her a political virago, a country wench, an instrument in the French court; but neither of these historians enters into the subjects further than is absolutely necessary to explain the events of that period.

To shew the fallacy of unsupported assertions, it may be mentioned as not a little singular, that a very similar charge was attempted to be brought against the venerable and pious Archbishop Cranmer, by the Popish party of those days, who did not scruple to affirm that he had been hostler at an inn, and of no education; and this evidently arose from his having married his first wife from the Dolphin inn at Cambridge, where, of course, he would have been a frequent visiter.

JAMES IV. OF SCOTLAND.

SINGULAR EVENTS WHICH PRECEDED THE FATAL BATTLE OF FLODDEN-FIELD.

“ When these prodigies
Do so conjointly meet, let not man say
These are their reasons—They are natural;
For I believe they are portentous things.”

SHAKSPEARE.

BUCHANAN, the Scottish historian, notwithstanding his acknowledged merit and reputation as a writer in that department of useful literature, his general knowledge and discernment in recording the eventful transactions of that country, appears to have a certain degree of discredit attached to his authority, from the circumstance of his having judged it proper to notice the various reports current at the time he wrote, of supernatural warnings and apparitions, which were then fully believed to have actually occurred at the times and on the occasions mentioned. In common justice to this writer it ought, however, to be observed, that he does not ever peremptorily assert such relations to be facts, but, with a commendable moderation, gives them as occurrences confirmed by evidence which he adduces, leaving others to form their own conclu-

sions from the particulars recorded, as generally credited at those times when the resulting events took place. Thus, in the instance now about to be related, after giving his authority, he candidly observes, "If I had not received this story from him," David Lindsey, "as a certain truth, I had omitted it as a romance of the vulgar." And, on another occasion, when speaking of one of these mysterious relations, "This," says he, "I shall not rashly credit, so I have no mind to refute; yet, it being delivered by others, and constantly affirmed to be true, I thought proper not to omit it*." And, indeed, taking the subject in a proper point of view, it may reasonably be a question, how far an impartial historian,—a chronicler of events,—is really justified in suppressing these and similar relations, however well accredited, merely because they may wear an appearance out of the common course of natural or customary events. If, however, the possibility, and thence the probability, of supernatural communications be once admitted, we may thence claim for Buchanan, and other writers, ancient and modern, a higher degree of credit than the prevailing scepticism of the present day may have hitherto accorded them.

In the early part of the reign of Henry the Eighth, when that monarch was engaged in a war

* 'History of Scotland,' 3d ed. vol. ii. p. 23.

with France, James the Fourth of Scotland commenced hostilities against England, avowedly as a diversion in favour of Louis the Twelfth, but more probably to serve his own private views. "This declaration of war," says Buchanan*, "being brought into *Scotland*, as the king was going to the army at *Linlithgoe*, whilst he was at *vespers* in the church (as the manner then was) there entered an old man, the hairs of his head being red inclined to yellow, and hanging down on his shoulders; his forehead sleek through baldness, bare-headed, in a long coat of a russet colour, girt with a linen girdle about his loins; in the rest of his aspect he was very venerable. He passed through the crowd to come to the king: when he came to him he leaned on the chair where the king sat, with a kind of rustic simplicity, and bespoke him thus, *O king*, said he, *I am sent to warn thee not to proceed in thy intended design, and if thou neglectest this admonition, neither thou nor thy followers shall prosper. I am commanded also to tell thee that thou shouldst not use the familiarity, intimacy and counsel of women; which, if thou dost, it will redound to thy ignominy and loss.* Having thus spoken, he withdrew himself into the crowd, and when the king inquired for him after prayers were ended, he could not be found, which matter seemed

* 'History of Scotland,' 3d ed. vol. ii. p. 119.

more strange, because none of those who stood next and observed him, as being desirous to put many questions to him, were sensible how he disappeared. Among them there was *David Lindsey* of *Mont* *, a man of approved worth and honesty, and of a learned education, who in the whole course of his life abhorred lying; and if I had not received this story from him as a certain truth, I had omitted it as a romance of the vulgar.”

Other mysterious events are recorded by the Scottish historians as having occurred previous to this rash and ill-fated expedition. Pitscottie, whose account of the preceding apparition or warning varies in no essential particular from that of Buchanan, relates also some circumstances which took place at the cross of Edinburgh †, in their nature so singular, and detailed in a strain so devoid of

* Sir David Lindsey was herald at arms, and servant to King James. He was an early and very strenuous supporter of the reformed religion.

“ In iis (i. e. qui propius astiterant) fuit David Lindesius, Montanus, homo spectatæ fidei et probitatis, nec a literarum studiis alienus, et cujus totius vitæ tenor longissime a mentiendo aberrat: atque nisi ego hanc, uti tradidi, pro certis accepissem, ut vulgatam vanis rumoribus fabulam, omissurus eram.”—Lib. xiii.

“ The king’s throne,” says Sir Walter Scott, “ in St. Catherine’s aisle, which he had constructed for himself, with twelve stalls for the knights companions of the order of the Thistle, is still shown as the place where the apparition was seen. The whole story is so well attested, that we have only the choice between a miracle and an imposture.”—Vide ‘ Marmion,’ Canto iv., Note vii.

† This cross was pulled down, by order of the civil authorities, in the year 1756; but even now proclamations are commonly made from the spot where it formerly stood.

guile, that a literal transcript will best do justice to the narration.

“In the mean time,” says Pitscottie, “when they were taking forth their artillery, and the king being in the abbey at the time, there was a cry heard at the market-cross of Edinburgh at the hour of midnight, proclaiming as it had been a summons, which was named and called by the proclaimer thereof, the summons plotock, which desired all men to compear, both Earl, and Lord, and Baron, and all honest gentlemen within the town (every man specified by his own name), to compear within the space of forty days before his master, where it should happen him to appoint and be for the time, under the pain of disobedience. But whether this summons was proclaimed by vain persons, night-walkers, or drunken men for their pastime, or if it was a spirit, I cannot tell truly; but it was shewn to me, that an indweller of the town, Mr. Richard Lawson, being evil-disposed, ganging in his gallery-stair, foreanent the cross, hearing this voice proclaiming this summons, thought marvel what it should be, cried on his servant to bring him his purse; and when he had brought him it, he took out a crown, and cast over the stair, saying, I appeal from that summons, judgment, and sentence thereof, and takes me all while in the mercy of God, and Christ Jesus, his

Son. Verily the author of this, that caused me write the manner of the summons, was a landed gentleman, who was at that time twenty years of age, and was in the town the time of the said summons, and thereafter, when the field was stricken, he swore to me, there was no man that escaped that was called in this summons, but that one man alone which made his protestation, and appealed from the said summons ; but all the live were perished in the field with the king."

"This supernatural citation," says Sir Walter Scott *, "is mentioned by all our Scottish historians. It was probably, like the apparition at Linlithgow, an attempt, by those averse to the war, to impose upon the superstitious temper of James IV." How it so happened that "*every man specified by his own name*" should have "perished in the field with the king," is yet to be accounted for ; nor has the penetrating eye of research yet succeeded in the discovery of any document or other traditional proof that there ever was a suggestion from any contemporary party of fraud and imposture ; which, had it been so, was very likely to transpire from the temper of the times, and reverse of fortune.

The subsequent events may be briefly told.

* Vide 'Marmion,' Canto v., Note xx.

Unmindful of this warning, as well as of some alarming dreams which the queen is said to have communicated to him; but which, he told her, only arose from the thoughts and cares of the day*, “from past feelings vividly renovating”, the unfortunate monarch, whose “superstitious temper” appears not to have been equal to his obstinacy, mustered his army near Edinburgh, and marched into England, where finally, on receiving a defiance from the English commander, the Earl of Surrey, he rashly resolved to meet the enemy in the field, though strongly dissuaded therefrom by his best friends—every motive of prudence and foresight being in favour of the Scottish troops retaining an almost inaccessible position.

The result was the battle of Flodden-field, where upwards of five thousand of the Scots,—the chief part of their prime nobility,—and the unfortunate James the Fourth—perished in the contest.

* Drummond's ‘Hist. of Scotland,’ pp. 143-4. Also Baker's Chr. 374.

NEGLECT OF A PREMONITION FATAL TO
HENRY II., KING OF FRANCE, &c.

“ Important hints the wise may reap
From sallies of the soul in sleep.”

Dr. COTTON.

TOWARDS the end of this monarch's reign, treaties of peace and amity had been successfully negotiated between that power and England, and also with Spain; which latter was cemented by the marriage of the king of Spain with the French princess Elizabeth, the ceremony being performed by proxy at the church of Notre Dame, in the French capital, the Duke of Alva representing his sovereign the Spanish monarch by proxy.—“The greatest rejoicings and festivities,” says Gifford in his History of France *, “took place on this occasion, and on the twenty-ninth of June † a grand tournament was holden in the Rue Saint Antoine, at which the king bore away the palm of victory. But as he was retiring from the circle he perceived two lances at one end of the lists, which were yet unbroken ;

* Vol. iii. p. 439.

† A. D. 1559.

one of these he took himself, and the other he sent to Montgomery, the captain of his guards, a man eminently skilled in all martial exercises, inviting him to break it with his sovereign in honour of the ladies. Montgomery hesitated for some time, and even twice refused to obey the summons: the queens of Scotland and France too, who were present, sent to entreat the king to content himself with the glory he had already acquired, and to run no further risk. Henry, however, persisted, and, at length, sent a positive order to Montgomery to prepare for the assault: he obeyed; the attack was violent; their lances were shivered in pieces, but the king's vizor having been deranged by the shock, one of the broken pieces of his adversary's lance pierced his forehead, just above the left eye, and he fell senseless on the ground. He was immediately conveyed to his palace, and the surgeons, after examining the wound, declared it, though dangerous, not incurable; but an abscess having unexpectedly formed in the head, their utmost skill proved ineffectual, and, on the tenth of July, Henry expired, in the forty-first year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign.

One of our early chroniclers relates, that on the very night previous to this unfortunate occurrence; queen Margaret, the wife of Henry, had a singular forewarning of this fatality in a dream, wherein she

saw her husband's eye put out ; and that, impressed with the idea of some impending danger, she earnestly besought him not to engage in the tournament, assigning her foreboding dream as the reason of her apprehensions. The king, incredulous on the subject, and regardless of danger, engaged vigorously in the sports of the field, and, as appears from the preceding account, would not quit till the disastrous event of the last encounter led to the fulfilment of the forewarning, and demonstrated the certain folly of obstinately adhering to a wilful disbelief of what *might be* the "warning voice" of some beneficent being, communicated for his good.

PRESAGES OF THE UNTIMELY FATE OF
WILLIAM II.

“That power
Which erring men call chance.”

MILTON.

THERE is a striking similarity in the alleged forewarning which so singularly preceded the death of Henry the Second of France and in that of William the Second of England. The detail of the untimely fate of the latter is thus given by Smollet*. “Just as he mounted his horse, in order to take the diversion of hunting in the New Forest, he is said to have been warned by a monk from going abroad that day, inasmuch as he (the monk) had dreamed a strange dream that seemed to presage his majesty’s death. Rufus, smiling at his superstition, ordered him to be paid for his zeal, and desired him to dream more favourably for the future. He was attended by Walter Tyrrel, a French knight, famous for his archery, who always accompanied him in these excursions, and to whom

* Vol. i. p. 463.

he that afternoon gave two arrows out of his own hand. Towards sunset they found themselves separated from the rest of the retinue, and the king alighted to wait for their taking post at their different stations; when a stag passing, he shot and wounded the animal, yet not so mortally but that he fled, and William followed, in hope of seeing him fall. As the sun beamed in his face, he held up his hand before his eyes, and stood in that posture looking at the wounded deer, when another starting from a thicket, Tyrrel let fly an arrow, which either glanced from a tree or the horns of the stag, and struck the king into the heart. He dropped dead instantaneously, and the innocent author of his death, terrified at the accident, galloped away to the sea-side, where he found a vessel, in which he was conveyed to the continent."

This is the generally received opinion of the way in which that monarch came by his death, and this is in some measure corroborated by the identical tree,—an oak,—being yet in existence, and traditionally pointed out by successive generations, from the period of the accident until the present time. It was first defended from public depredation by being paled round by the orders of Charles the Second. It has, however, been said that Tyrrel was not in the forest at the time the accident occurred, but that the king, stumbling with an

arrow in his hand, was the cause of his own death, not a very probable suggestion. But "*Perhaps,*" says Lord Littleton*, "the arrow that slew William Rufus was neither his own, nor Tyrrel's, but came from the hand of some other person unknown, who was instigated to aim at the breast of the king, by private revenge for a private wrong. The reputation of his successor, I think, is too good to admit a suspicion, which might otherwise be conceived, that he knew better than the public how his brother was slain."

However probable may be the noble historian's suspicion,—and the latter hint is very problematical,—it cannot be entertained in contradiction to a generally received tradition, strengthened by corroborating circumstances. Be that as it may, it is quite certain that the king met his death in the New Forest, and by the wound of an arrow. And the same chronicler who relates the warning which preceded, by only a few hours, the untoward accident, whereby Henry the Second of France terminated his existence, records also a singular dream occurring to the English monarch, the night previous only to that day, in which he lost his life in the New Forest.

It is recorded that William the Second "dreamed

* Hist. Henry II. vol. i. p. 87.

that the veins of his arms were broken, and that the blood issued out in great abundance: and many other like presages there were, by which, it seems, he had friends somewhere (as well as Julius Cæsar) that did all they could to give him warning; but that as Cæsar's, so his evil genius would not suffer him to take it; for king William, notwithstanding he was forewarned by many signs, would go out a hunting in the New Forest: yet something moved with the many presages, he stayed within all the forenoon; but about dinner time an artificer came, and brought him six cross-bow arrows, very strong and sharp, whereof four he kept to himself, and the other two he delivered to Sir Walter Tyrrel, a knight of Normandy, his bow-bearer, saying, 'Here, Tyrrel, take you two, for you know how to shoot them to good purpose.' And so, having at dinner drank more liberally than his custom, as it were in contempt of presages, out he rides to the New Forest, where Sir Walter Tyrrel shooting at a deer, at a place called Charingham, the arrow glanced against a tree, or, as some say, grazed upon the back of the deer, and flying forward, hit the king upon the breast, with which he immediately fell down dead."

REMARKABLE DREAM PRECEDING THE DEATH OF
JAMES V. OF SCOTLAND.

“Horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts.”

MILTON.

THE two very singular relations immediately preceding, which closed the career of Henry the Second of France, and William Rufus of England,—supposing them to be true, and there seems no reasonable argument to disprove them, since “what none can prove a forgery may be true,”—would almost induce a belief, that, on some particular occasions, there may be, in dreams, suggestions arising from some cause beyond our present comprehension; and it is indeed a fact, that most inexplicable coincidences between our visionary dreams and waking realities have, at times, occurred, which are beyond the power of the metaphysician to explain.

Of one of this description, the Scottish historian, George Buchanan, gives a remarkable detail. He relates that James the Fifth, previous to his death,

was much perplexed with dreams; “of which,” says he, “there was one more remarkable than the rest, which was much talked of. That in his sleep he saw *James Hamilton* running at him with his drawn sword; and that he first cut off his right arm, then his left, and threatened him shortly to come and take away his life, and then disappeared; when he awaked in a fright, and was pondering many things about the event of his dream, word was brought him, that both his sons died almost at one and the same moment of time; one, at *St. Andrew’s*, the other at *Stirling*.”

This must have happened about the year 1539; and it may be in the remembrance of those acquainted with the events of that period, that the *James Hamilton* mentioned above had, some time previous to this occurrence, filled the office of Sheriff of *Linlithgoe*; and that being a believer in, and a strong supporter of, the reformed religion, he was, not long before this took place, imprisoned, in consequence of holding such tenets, tried, and afterwards executed.

The authors of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, writing upon the subject of dreams, observe, that “the imaginary transactions in which we are thus engaged, may be such as are actually to occupy us in life; the strange and seemingly incoherent appearances which are then presented to the mind’s eye,

may allude to some events which are to befall ourselves or others. It is therefore by no means impossible, or inconsistent with the general analogy of nature, that dreams should have a respect to futurity.

LORD DARNLEY,
HUSBAND OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

“ What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed ?”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE most prominent circumstances attending the short-lived union between the Lord Darnley and Mary, Queen of Scotland, are in vivid recollection of every one, acquainted with British history. Smollet speaks of Henry as “ weak, giddy, and inconstant ; dissolute, proud, and imperious* :” the alternate slave and tyrant of her to whom he ought to have been a sovereign and protector.

Useless as was his life, inefficient as was his brief career, yet, it is hardly possible to avoid deploring the untimely fate of one, who appears only to have been placed in the glare of sovereignty, to sink unregarded into the obscurity of oblivion. It is not very clear, whether he was not the victim of some deleterious preparation ; even at the time when

* Vide Hist. Eng. Vol. vi. page 233.

his life was prematurely terminated, in consequence of the dwelling in which he was lodged being blown up by gunpowder, in the year 1566. He had however, as may be supposed, some friends and adherents; among whom, may be reckoned James Stuart Earl of Athol, who is asserted to have been the chief promoter of his marriage with the reigning Queen.

Buchanan, in his history of Scotland, gives the following curious detail of what he there terms two prodigies, which occurred at the period when the untimely fate of Henry was accomplished.

“Two prodigies,” says the historian, “happened at that time, which are worth the while to relate. One of them a little preceded the murder, and it was thus. One *John Londin*, a gentleman of *Fife*, having been long sick of a fever, the day before the king was kill’d, about noon, raised himself a little in his bed, and, as if he had been astonished, cry’d out to those that stood by him, with a loud voice, *to go help the king, for the parricides were just then murdering him*; and a while after, he called out with a mournful tone, *Now it is too late to help him, he is already murdered*; and he himself lived not long after he had utter’d these words. The other was just at the time, as the murder happen’d. Three of the familiar friends of the Earl of *Athol’s*, the king’s cousin, men of reputation for valour and

estate, had their lodgings not far from the king's; when they were asleep about mid-night, there was a certain man seemed to come to *Dugal Stuart*, who lay next the wall, and to draw his hand gently over his beard and cheek, so as to awake him, saying, *Arise, they are offering violence to you.* He presently awakened, and considering the apparition within himself, another of them cries out presently in the same bed, *Who kicks me?* *Dugal* answered, *Perhaps 'tis a cat, which used to walk about in the night;* upon which, the third, who was not yet awake, rose presently out of his bed and stood upon the floor, demanding *who it was that had given him a box on the ear?* As soon as he had spoken, a person seem'd to go out of the house by the door, and that not without some noise. Whilst they were descanting on what they had heard and seen, the noise of the blowing up of the king's house put them into a very terrible consternation."

Camden, the historian, who wrote after Buchanan, gives a very different colouring to the character of Mary; and endeavours to invalidate the testimony of the latter. This may be accounted for, from the former having written in England during the reign of James the First, to whom he was an herald officer, and he might very probably feel a strong bias against the author who had so fully developed the conduct of her, who was the

mother of his sovereign. Moreover, as Buchanan was of the reformed religion, his testimony against Mary, on whom the catholics of Europe placed much reliance, would, in consequence, be depreciated by their influence. As, however, Camden does not endeavour to refute, nor does he indeed even mention, many prominent circumstances of the greatest notoriety,—such, for instance, as Mary's connection with David Rizio,—it may be reasonably concluded, that he was not over-scrupulous in suppressing other evidence. It is not, therefore, very difficult to determine to which writer most credit is due.

LORD HASTINGS.

“ How easy 'tis, where destiny proves kind,
 With full-spread sails to run before the wind !
 But those that 'gainst stiff gales laveering go,
 Must be at once resolv'd and skilful too.”

DRYDEN.

THERE are certain historical events which attain a degree of prominent popularity, or kind of factitious pre-eminence, arising from circumstances which bring them before the mass of mankind in never-ceasing remembrance. Of this description is that period of English history towards the conclusion of the fifteenth century, which is so strongly marked by the ambitious career of Richard Plantagenet from the protectorship of the realm to the attainment of kingly power. Independently of the great national importance of those eventful times, the attending circumstances are in themselves of very peculiar interest from their near approximation to romantic adventure, which, aided by the powerful pen of our great dramatic bard, has thrown a singular magical influence over those most interesting scenes. Thus, from the prince to the peasant—from the voluminous historian to the brief tale of

infancy—learned and ignorant—all are alike apprized of the tyrannous cruelty of the Protector Gloster—of Richard the Third.

It was during the Protectorship in 1483, that the Lord Hastings was so unwarrantably executed on the accusation of the moment without any form of trial ; and it appears not a little extraordinary, that up to the very last hour the unwary nobleman never entertained even a remote suspicion of any insidious designs against his own personal safety, or that of his youthful sovereign, Edward the Fifth ; otherwise his own power and unbounded popularity with the citizens of London had secured him from all immediate danger. So far from any idea that way tending, he seems to have disregarded every warning voice, relying with a blind and implicit confidence in the assumed friendship of Catesby, a sycophantic spy of Richard, whose repeated attempts to gain him over to the designs of the Protector, would have rendered one more prone to suspicion at once aware of the actual state of affairs, and put him upon his guard against one who, under the mask of confidence, was betraying his too credulous benefactor at the price of Gloster's patronage.

Up to the moment of accusation—a moment which preceded the execution by scarcely a brief hour's preparation—the unfortunate Lord Hastings, so far from suspecting the Protector's ambitious

views, or the artful treachery of Catesby, evidently had no other idea when previously sounded as to his sentiments on the political state of affairs, than that it was meant for a trial of his loyalty to the infant monarch. Still less did he heed the forewarning which his noble friend and coadjutor the Lord Stanley communicated to him, the night previous only to his unexpected and unjustifiable execution, a fate which Stanley himself very narrowly escaped.

The circumstances of the accusation, their evident fallacy—the glaring falsehood of the assertions—the immediate execution, without even the form of any trial or preparation—are in themselves more improbable than the forewarning which previously occurred, though as this rests only on the simple and uncorroborated authority of one of our early chroniclers*, it may, perhaps, be considered only so far interesting as bearing a remarkable coincidence to the contemporaneous events, and as demonstrating the popular belief of that period,—a belief without which any report of the kind would not have met with sufficient attention, to have claimed the notice requisite to warrant insertion in the annals of the times.

The “mockery of unquiet slumbers” appears to have forcibly impressed the mind of Stanley with a

* Baker's Chron. 320, 4.

sense of impending danger from the Protector. It is said, he dreamed that a boar—the cognisance of Plantagenet—had gored both him and Hastings on the head, until the blood ran about their shoulders. He sent a message to his noble friend relating the circumstance, which was received in a temper not very discordant to the hypothesis of past feelings renovating. “ Good Lord,” said he, “ leaneth your master so much to such trifles to put faith in dreams, which either his own fears create, or else they rise in the night by reason of the day’s thoughts? Go back, therefore, to thy master, commend me to him, and pray him to be merry and have no fear; for assure him, I am as sure of the man he speaks of as of mine own hand,” alluding to Catesby, the Protector’s spy upon the movements and conduct of Hastings.

But this dream, supposing it to have occurred, and there is no proof that it did not, may, it will be said, have been the effect of past feelings renovating from ideas arising in Lord Stanley’s mind accordant to the temper of the times. Be it so; but whence the fortunate coincidence in point of time? This could not very well be premised, as the whole transaction evidently took the council by surprise, and during the confusion occasioned by the accusation of Lord Hastings, Stanley himself was badly wounded, and even narrowly escaped with his life.

This latter circumstance precludes the idea of any previous intimation of mischief having been transmitted to Lord Stanley, who, had he received any confidential intelligence of what was the intention of Gloster, would not have resorted to the invention of a dream, sent by a messenger on what was not unlikely, from the character of Hastings, to turn out a fruitless errand.

“ All that can be said of it is, that the coincidence was a fortunate one* ;” and that “ it must be considered that, agreeable to the well-known doctrine of chances, the event might as well occur then as at any other time †.”

* Vide Hibbert, 173.

† Ib. 169.

PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES ATTENDING
 THE DEATH OF LORD BROOK,
 WHO WAS SLAIN AT LICHFIELD DURING THE WAR BETWEEN THE KING
 AND PARLIAMENT, IN THE YEAR 1642.

“ History is philosophy teaching by examples.”

THOUGH no supernatural appearance, no preternatural forewarning, foretold the death of this nobleman, yet there were some peculiar circumstances attending his last days, which were sufficiently remarkable to attract particular notice at the time they occurred, and perhaps are not wholly irrelevant to the present subject, since they forcibly tend to prove that

“ There’s a Divinity that shapes our ends,
 Rough-hew them as we will.”—SHAKSPEARE.

“ In another part of the kingdom, Lord Brook was killed by a shot, while he was taking possession of Lichfield for the Parliament.”—HUME’S *Hist. Eng.*, vol. vii. p. 485.

“ Lord Brook, in attacking some of the King’s troops intrenched at Lichfield, lost his life ; but the post was taken by his followers.”—SMOLLET’S *Hist. Eng.* vol. vii., p. 253.

No further notice than the above is taken by these, our standard historians, of this event; but in a late edition of Hume*, the following note appears at the foot of the page.

“ He (Lord Brook) had taken possession of Lichfield, and was viewing from a window St. Chad’s cathedral, in which a party of the royalists had fortified themselves. He was cased in complete armour, but was shot through the eye by a random ball. Lord Brook was a zealous Puritan; and had formerly said, that he hoped to see with his eyes the ruin of all the Cathedrals of England. It was a superstitious remark of the royalists, that he was killed on St. Chad’s day by a shot from St. Chad’s cathedral, which pierced that very eye by which he hoped to see the ruins of all cathedrals.”—
DUGDALE, p. 118.

The Lord Chancellor Clarendon enters more fully on the transactions of that eventful period; and, speaking of this particular circumstance, he thus writes :—

“ Some gentlemen of that county†, rather well affected than experienced, before they were well enough provided to get through their work, seized on the close in Lichfield for the king; a place naturally strong, and defended with a moat,

* 1803.

† Stafford.

and a very high and thick wall; which, in the infancy of the war, was thought a good fortification. To suppress this growing force, within the limits of his association, the Lord Brook advanced with a formed body, horse, foot, and cannon; part drawn from the Earl of Essex's army, and the rest out of the garrisons of Coventry and Warwick; and, without any resistance, entered the city of Lichfield, which, being unfortified, was open to all comers. The number in the close was not great, nor their provisions such as should have been, and very well might have been, made; so that he made no doubt of being speedily master of it, Sir John Gill having brought up a good addition of strength to him from Derby. He was so far from apprehending any danger from the besieged, that himself lodged in a house within musket-shot of the close; where the very day he meant to assault it, sitting in his chamber, and the window open, he was, from the wall of the close, by a common soldier, shot with a musket in the eye; of which he died without speaking a word.

“ There were many discourses and observations upon his death, that it should be upon St. Chad's day, (being the second day of March,) by whose name, he being a bishop shortly after the planting of Christianity in this island, that church had been anciently called. And it was reported, that in his

prayer, that very morning, (for he used to pray publicly, though his chaplain were in his presence,) he wished, 'that, if the cause he were in were not right and just, he might presently be cut off.' They who were well acquainted with him believed him to be well-natured and just; and rather seduced and corrupted in his understanding, than perverse and malicious. Whether his passions or conscience swayed him, he was undoubtedly one of those who could have been with most difficulty reconciled to the government of church and state; and, therefore, his death was looked upon as no ill omen of peace, and was exceedingly lamented by his party, which had scarce a more absolute confidence in any man than him."

However erroneous might be the political sentiments of Lord Brook, his character must silence any invidious attempt to affix the stain of insincerity or deceit upon his conduct: nor can the truth of the noble historian's narration be objected to; since, although the incidents may wear the outward garb of superstition, yet that they did take place, as there related, is not, I believe, any where attempted to be denied. The chief argument, therefore, with modern sceptical opposers of all opinions approaching to superstitious feelings, is founded upon a perversion of the incidents as they are recorded. This has been so lucidly combated,

in a very recent and widely diffused publication ; that an extract from that work, though of a class, perhaps, not generally much assimilating with the present discussion, may, nevertheless, be the most effectual commentary which can be offered.

“ Why,” it is objected, “ does the Ruler of the universe inflict sudden destruction as the *way to set right a conscientious man* ?

“ And is this all,” says our Author, “ if it is, and it be witty, most unfortunately for the wit, Lord Brook had not prayed to be set right, but to be ‘ cut off’ if wrong. So far, therefore, the wit depends upon a *false statement*, for his real prayer was complied with. But even without this, could there be no other reason for his death than what concerned Lord Brook ?

“ The notoriety of the prayer,” continues this discriminating writer, “ and it’s issue, made it of the last importance to those who witnessed the facts. To them opinion *was* set right, and hence the argument against interposition on account of absurdity, falls into absolute nothing.”

THE APPEARANCE OF LORD TYRONE TO
LADY BERESFORD,

“Truth incontestable! in spite of all
A Bayle has preached, or a Voltaire believ'd.”

YOUNG. Night VII. l. 251, 2.

OF the truth of the following narration “the evidence has never been shaken,” as the late Dr. Ferrier very justly remarked on that of Ficinus and Mercato, to which indeed it bears a striking resemblance. They afford a sort of mutual confirmation of the credibility of each other; if the one has occurred, why should the other be doubted? The circumstances of the present relation are of a date so recent, as to render the investigation of their verity a matter of no great difficulty; and they are, if I am rightly informed, most firmly believed by members of the family who would, it may be imagined, have immediately detected and exposed any presumptuous fabrication of this description. There can indeed be no reasonable doubt of its having taken place; in what way, other than a supernatural communication, it is to be accounted for, is another question. The strongest

feature in the relation, appears to be that of the marked and extreme incredulity of Lady Beresford, which even one "risen from the dead" could not overcome nor convince, without some visible and material proof of its irrefragability.

Lord Tyrone and Lady Beresford were born in Ireland; they were left orphans in their infancy to the care of the same person, by whom they were both educated in the principles of Deism. When they were each of them about fourteen years of age they fell into very different hands. The persons on whom the care of them now devolved used every possible endeavour to eradicate the erroneous principles they had imbibed, and to persuade them to embrace the revealed religion, but in vain; their arguments were insufficient to convince them, though they were powerful enough to stagger their former faith. Though now separated from each other, their friendship remained unalterable, and they continued to regard each other with a sincere and fraternal affection. After some years had elapsed, and they were each of them grown up, they made a solemn promise to each other that whoever should first die, would, if permitted, appear to the other, to declare what religion was most approved of by the Supreme Being. Lady Beresford was shortly afterwards addressed by Sir Marcus Beresford, to whom,

after a few years, she was married; but no change in condition had power to alter her friendship: the families frequently visited each other, often spent more than a fortnight together. A short time after one of these visits, Sir Marcus Beresford remarked, when his lady came down to breakfast in the morning, that her countenance was unusually pale, and bore evident marks of terror and confusion: he inquired anxiously after her health, she assured him she was well, perfectly well; he repeated his inquiries, and begged to know if any thing had disordered her; she replied no, she was as well as usual. "Have you hurt your wrist, have you sprained it?" said he, observing a black ribband bound round it: she replied no, she had not; but added, "Let me conjure you, Sir M., never to inquire the cause of my wearing this ribband; you will never more see me without it: if it concerned you as a husband to know it, I would not for a moment conceal it from you,—I never in my life denied you a request; but of this I must entreat you to forgive my refusal, and never to urge me further on the subject." "Very well, my lady," said he, smiling; "since you so earnestly desire me, I will inquire no further."

The conversation here ended; but breakfast was scarcely over, when Lady B. inquired if the post

was come in ? she was told it was not. In a few minutes she again rang the bell for her servant, and repeated the inquiry, "Is not the post yet come?" she was told it was not. "Do you expect any letter," said Sir M., "that you are so anxious concerning the coming of the post?" "I do," she answered; "I expect to hear that Lord Tyrone is dead; he died last Tuesday at four o'clock." "I never in my life," said Sir M., "believed you superstitious, but you must have had some idle dream, which has thus alarmed and terrified you."

At that instant a servant opened the door, and delivered to them a letter sealed with black. "It is as I expected," said Lady B.—"he is dead." Sir M. opened the letter; it came from Lord Tyrone's steward, and contained the melancholy intelligence that his master died on the Tuesday preceding, at the very time Lady B. had specified. Sir M. entreated her to compose her spirits, and to endeavour as much as lay in her power not to make herself unhappy. She assured him she felt much easier than she had done for some time past, and added, "I can communicate to you intelligence which I know will prove welcome; I can assure you, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that I am with child of a son." Sir M. received the intelligence with that pleasure that might be expected, and

expressed in the strongest terms the felicity he should experience from such an event, which he had long so ardently desired.

After a period of some months, Lady B. was delivered of a son ; she had before been the mother of two daughters only. Sir Marcus survived the birth of his son little more than four years. After his decease his lady went out but little from home ; she visited no family but that of a clergyman who resided in the same village, with whom she frequently passed a few hours ; the rest of her time was entirely devoted to solitude, and she appeared for ever determined to banish all other society. The clergyman's family consisted of himself, his wife, and one son, who at Sir M.'s death was quite a youth ; to his son, however, she was afterwards married, in the space of a few years, notwithstanding the disparity of his years, and the manifest imprudence of such a connexion, so unequal in every respect.

The event justified the expectation of every one. Lady B. was treated by her young husband with neglect and cruelty, and the whole of his conduct evinced him the most abandoned libertine, utterly destitute of every principle of virtue and humanity. To this her second husband, Lady B. brought two daughters ; afterwards, such was the profligacy of his conduct, that she insisted upon a separation. They

parted for several years, when so great was the contrition he expressed for his former ill conduct, that, won over by his supplications and promises, she was induced to pardon, and once more reside with him ; and was, after some time, made the mother of another daughter.

The day on which she had lain in a month, being the anniversary of her birth-day, she sent for Lady ——, of whose friendship she had long been possessed, and a few friends, to request them to spend the day with her. About noon, the clergyman by whom she had been baptised, and with whom she had all her life maintained an intimacy, came into the room to inquire after her health ; she told him she felt perfectly well, and requested him to spend the day with her, it being her birth-day. “ For,” said she, “ I am forty-eight this day.” “ No, my lady,” answered the clergyman, “ you are mistaken ; your mother and myself have had many disputes concerning your age, and I have at length discovered I am right. Happening to go last week to the parish you were born in, I was resolved to put an end to my doubt by searching the register, and find that you are forty-seven this day.”

“ You have signed my death-warrant,” said she, “ I have not much longer to live. I must therefore entreat you to leave me immediately, as I have some things of importance to settle before I die.”

When the clergyman had left Lady B., she sent to forbid her company coming, and at the same time to request Lady ———, and her son, of whom Sir M. Beresford was father, and who was then about twelve years of age, to come to her apartment. Immediately upon their arrival, having ordered her attendants to quit the room, “I have something to communicate to you both before I die, a period which is not far distant: you, Lady, are no stranger to the friendship that always subsisted between Lord Tyrone and myself; we were educated under the same roof, in the same principles—those of Deism. When the friends into whose hands we afterwards fell endeavoured to persuade us to embrace the revealed religion, their arguments, though insufficient to convince us, were powerful enough to stagger our former faith, and to leave us wavering between the two opinions. In this perplexing state of doubt and uncertainty, we made a solemn promise to each other, that whichever should happen to die first would, if permitted by the Almighty, appear to the other to declare what religion was most acceptable to him. Accordingly one night, when Sir M. and myself were in bed, I awaked, and discovered Lord Tyrone sitting by my bed-side; I screamed out, and endeavoured, but in vain, to awake Sir M. For Heaven’s sake, Lord Tyrone, said I, by what means or for what

purpose came you here at this time of night? 'Have you then forgot our promise?' said he: 'I died last Tuesday at four o' clock, and have been permitted by the Supreme Being to appear to you, to assure you the revealed religion is the true and only religion by which we can be saved. I am further suffered to inform you, that you are now with child of a son, who it is decreed shall marry my daughter; not many years after his birth Sir M. will die, and you will marry again, and to a man by whose ill-treatment you will be rendered miserable: you will bring him two daughters, and afterwards a son, in child-bed of whom you will die in the 47th year of your age.'

'Just Heaven, exclaimed I, and cannot I prevent this? 'Undoubtedly you may,' returned he—'you have a free agency, and may prevent it all by resisting every temptation to a second marriage; but your passions are strong, you know not their power; hitherto you have had no trial, nor am I permitted to tell you; but, if after this warning you persist in your infidelity, your lot in another world will be miserable indeed.' May I ask, said I, if you are happy? 'Had I been otherwise, said he, I should not have been permitted to appear to you.' I may thence infer you are happy? He smiled. But how, said I, when morning comes, shall I be convinced that your appearance thus to me has

been real, and not the mere phantom of my own imagination? 'Will not the news of my death,' said he, 'be sufficient to convince you?' No, returned I, I might have had such a dream, and that dream might accidentally come to pass; I wish to have some stronger proof of its reality. 'You shall,' said he; then waving his hand, the bed-curtains, which were of common velvet, were instantly drawn through a large iron hoop, by which the tester of the bed, which was of an oval form, was suspended. 'In that, said he, you cannot be mistaken; no mortal could have performed this.' True, said I; but sleeping we are often possessed of far greater strength than awake; though awake I could not have done it, asleep I might—I shall still doubt. He then said, 'You have a pocket-book, in the leaves of which I will write: you know my handwriting.' I replied, yes. He wrote with a pencil on one side of the leaves. Still, said I, in the morning, I may doubt that, though awake, I could not imitate your hand, asleep I might. 'You are hard of belief,' said he; 'I must not touch you, it would injure you irreparably, it is not for spirits to touch mortal flesh.' I do not regard a small blemish, said I. 'You are a woman of courage,' said he, 'hold out your hand.' I did; he touched my wrist; his hand was cold as marble: in a moment the sinews shrank up, every nerve withered.

‘Now, said he, while you live let no mortal eye behold that wrist—to see it would be sacrilege. He stopped—I turned to him again—he was gone.—During the time in which I had conversed with him, my thoughts were perfectly calm and collected; but the moment he was gone, I felt chilled with horror, and a cold sweat came over me; every limb and joint shook under me: I endeavoured to awake Sir M., but all in vain; all my efforts were ineffectual. In this state of agitation and horror I lay some time, when a shower of tears came to my relief. I dropped asleep. In the morning Sir Marcus arose and dressed himself as usual, without perceiving the state in which the curtains remained. When I awoke, I found Sir M. was gone down. I arose, and having put on my clothes, went into the gallery adjoining our apartments, and took from thence a long broom, (such a one as in a large house is frequently used to sweep the corners,) with the help of which, though not without difficulty, I took down the curtain, as I imagined their extraordinary position would excite wonder among the servants, and occasion inquiries I wished to avoid. I then went up to my bureau, locked up the pocket-book, and took out a piece of black ribband which I bound round my wrist. When I came down, the agitation of mind on my countenance was too visible to pass long unobserved by Sir M. He

instantly remarked my confusion, and inquired the cause. I assured him I was well, perfectly well, but informed him Lord Tyrone was no more; that he died on the preceding Tuesday at the hour of four, and at the same time entreated him to drop all inquiries concerning the black riband he noticed on my wrist. He kindly desisted from further importunity, nor did he ever after imagine the cause. You, my son, as had been foretold, I brought into the world, and in little more than four years after your birth your father died in my arms. After this melancholy event, I determined, as the only probable means by which to avoid the dreadful sequel of the prediction, to give up every pleasure, and to pass the remainder of my days in solitude; but few can endure to remain in a state of sequestration. I commenced an intercourse with one family, and only one; nor could I then see the fatal consequences which afterwards resulted from it. Little did I imagine that their son, their only son, then a mere youth, would prove the person destined by fate to prove my undoing. In a few years I ceased to regard with indifference: I endeavoured by every possible means to conquer a passion, the fatal consequences of which (if I should ever be weak enough to yield to its impulse) I too well knew, and fondly believed I should overcome its influence; when the evening of one fatal day terminated

my fortitude, and plunged me in a moment down that abyss I had been so long meditating how to shun. He had frequently been soliciting his parents to go into the army, and at length obtained their permission, and came to bid me farewell before his departure.

“ The moment he entered the room, he fell down on his knees at my feet, and told me he was miserable—that I alone was the cause of it. That instant my fortitude forsook me ; I gave myself up for lost ; and considering my fate as inevitable, without further hesitation consented to an union, the immediate result of which I knew to be misery, and its end, death. The conduct of my husband, after a few years were passed, amply warranted my demand for a separation. I hoped by this means to avoid the fatal sequel of the prophecy ; but, won over by his repeated entreaties, I was prevailed on to pardon and once more to reside with him, though not until after I had, as I supposed, passed my forty-seventh year ; but alas ! I have heard this day, from indisputable authority, that I have hitherto lain under a mistake, with regard to my age—that I am but forty-seven this day. Of the near approach of my death, therefore, I entertain not the least doubt ; but I do not dread its arrival. Armed with the sacred precept of Christianity, I can meet the king of terrors without dismay ; and without

a tear bid adieu to the regions of mortality for ever.

“When I am dead, as the necessity of its concealment closes with my life, I wish that you, my lady, would unbind my wrist, take from thence the black riband, and let my son, with yourself, behold it.” Lady B. here paused for some time; but, resuming her conversation, she entreated her son to behave so as to merit the high honour he would in future receive from an union with Lord Tyrone’s daughter. Lady B. then expressed a wish to lie down on a bed to compose herself to sleep. Lady —— and her son immediately called her attendants and quitted the room, after having first desired them attentively to watch their mistress; and should they observe any change, to call her instantly. An hour passed, and all was silent in the room. They listened at the door, and every thing was still; but in about half an hour more a bell rang violently; they flew to her apartment; but before they reached the door of it, they heard servants exclaim, “My mistress is dead.” Lady —— then desired the servants to quit the room. Lady B.’s son with herself approached the bed of his mother; they knelt down by the side of it. Lady —— then lifted up her hand, unbound the black riband, and found the wrist exactly in the same state Lady B. had described, every nerve withered,

every sinew shrunk up. Lady B.'s son, as has been predicted, is now married to Lord Tyrone's daughter. The black riband and pocket-book are now in the possession of Lady ——, by whom the above narrative is dated in Ireland; who, together with the Tyrone family, will be found ready to attest its truth.

Dublin, August 16th, 1802.

LORD LYTTLETON.

“The truth appears so naked on my side
That any purblind eye may find it out.”

SHAKSPEARE.

SIR NATHANIEL WRAXALL, in his Memoirs, relates that, “dining at Pitt-place, about four years after the death of Lord Lyttleton, in the year 1783, I had the curiosity to visit the bed-chamber where the casement-window, at which Lord Lyttleton asserted the dove appeared to flutter, was pointed out to me; and at his step-mother’s, the dowager Lady Lyttleton’s, in Portugal-street, Grosvenor-square, I have frequently seen a painting, which she herself executed, in 1780, expressly to commemorate the event: it hung in a conspicuous part of the drawing-room. There the dove appears at a window, while a female figure, habited in white, stands at the foot of the bed, announcing to Lord Lyttleton his dissolution. Every part of the picture was faithfully designed, after the description given to her by the valet-de-chambre who attended him, to whom his master related all the circumstances.”*

* There is said to be an engraving extant, taken from this picture.

The circumstances of this singularly extraordinary prewarning of death, and its undoubted fulfilment, are so generally credited, and so widely circulated, that I need not hesitate to transcribe such particulars as I have been able to procure ; though, the time being yet so recent, I must be allowed, for reasons sufficiently obvious, to suppress the names of some of the individuals closely connected with the events related.

The character of the late Lord Lyttleton* is in the lively remembrance of too many to need any notice here ; further than observing, that an extreme, inordinate passion for the fair sex, and sentiments closely approximating to the sceptical infection of the times, tended to throw a dark shade over superior talent and brilliancy of manners, which it is to be regretted should have been so intemperately allied.

Two nights previous to his death, it appears, from an account given by a relation of Lady Lyttleton, † “ that, on his retiring to his bed, after his servant was dismissed and his light extinguished, he heard a noise resembling the fluttering of a dove at his chamber-window. This attracted his attention to the spot, when, looking in the direction of the sound, he saw the figure of an unhappy female

* Son of the accomplished and elegant author and poet, George Lord Lyttleton.

† His lordship's relict, now alive, and resident in the south-west part of Worcestershire.

whom he had seduced and deserted, and who, when deserted, had put a violent end to her own existence, standing in the aperture of the window from which the fluttering sound had proceeded. The form approached the foot of the bed: the room was preternaturally light; the objects in the chamber were distinctly visible. Raising her hand, and pointing to a dial which stood on the mantel-piece of the chimney, the figure, with a severe solemnity of voice and manner, announced to the appalled and conscience-stricken man, that on that very hour, on the third day after the visitation, his life and his sins would be concluded, and nothing but their punishment remain, if he availed himself not of the warning to repentance which he had received. The eye of Lord Lyttleton glanced upon the dial; the hand was on the stroke of twelve:—again the apartment was involved in total darkness:—the warning spirit disappeared, and bore away at her departure all the lightness of heart and buoyancy of spirit, ready flow of wit, and vivacity of manner, which had formerly been the pride and ornament of the unhappy being to whom she had delivered her tremendous message.”

Another account is thus given, by a gentleman who was upon a visit to his lordship at the time the circumstance occurred.

“ I was,” says he, “ at Pitt-place, Epsom, when

Lord Lyttleton died; Lord F—t—e, Lady F—d, and the two Misses A—s, were also present. Lord Lyttleton had not long been returned from Ireland, and frequently had been seized with suffocating fits; he was attacked several times by them in the course of the preceding month. While he was at his house in Hill-street, Berkeley-square, it happened that he dreamt, three days before his death, that he saw a fluttering bird; and afterwards that a woman appeared to him in white apparel, and said to him, ‘Prepare to die; you will not live three days.’ His lordship was much alarmed, and called a servant from a closet adjoining, who found him much agitated, and in a profuse perspiration: the circumstance had a considerable effect all the next day on his lordship’s spirits. On the third day, while his lordship was at breakfast with the above personages, he said, ‘If I live over to-night, I shall have jockeyed the ghost, for this is the third day.’ The whole party presently set off for Pitt-place, where they had not long arrived, when his lordship was visited by one of his accustomed fits: after a short interval, he recovered. He dined at five o’clock that day, and went to bed at eleven, when his servant was about to give him rhubarb and mint-water; but his lordship, perceiving him stir it with a toothpick, called him a slovenly dog, and bade him go and fetch a teaspoon; but on the man’s return,

he found his master in a fit ; and the pillow being placed high, his chin bore hard upon his neck, when the servant, instead of relieving his lordship on the instant, from his perilous situation, ran in his fright, and called out for help, but on his return, he found his lordship dead.”

“ In explanation of this strange tale, it is said, that Lord Lyttleton acknowledged, previously to his death, that the woman he had seen in his dream was the mother of the two Misses A—s, mentioned above, whom, together with a third sister, then in Ireland, his lordship had seduced, and prevailed on to leave their parent, who resided near his country residence in Shropshire. It is further stated, that Mrs. A— died of grief, through the desertion of her children, at the precise time when the female vision appeared to his lordship ; and that about the period of his own dissolution, a personage answering his description visited the bed side of the late M—P—A—s, Esqr., (who had been the friend and companion of Lord Lyttleton in his revels,) and suddenly throwing open the curtains, desired Mr. A— to come to him. The latter, not knowing that his lordship had returned from Ireland, suddenly got up, when the phantom disappeared ! Mr. A— frequently declared, that the alarm caused him to have a short fit of illness ; and in his subsequent visits to Pitt-place, no solicitations could

ever prevail on him to take a bed there; but he would invariably return, however late, to the Spread Eagle Inn, at Epsom, for the night.

I have endeavoured, but in vain, to trace where some further peculiar incidents are related. It is, however, in strong recollection, that previous to the hour at which the appearance had predicted the death of his lordship, his friends, unknown to him, had set forward the time-pieces an hour in advance of the real time; and upon their striking twelve, at the eleventh hour, they ventured to congratulate him on the error of the prediction; which, however, did not produce the effect intended, as his lordship's reply expressed an opinion that the time was not then expired.

Whether this may be considered as an apparition, a dream, or, as "some past feeling renovated;" the circumstances and accordant facts are too remarkable and important not to merit attention. It cannot be, with propriety, maintained, that a dream, working upon his lordship's feelings, was the cause of the precise fulfilment of the mysterious warning; since his death was, more immediately, the effect of a momentary neglect of his servant, occasioned by want of presence of mind; and which, had assistance been promptly given, would in all probability, humanly speaking, have been prevented, or at least protracted to a more distant period.

WARNING OF LORD ROSSMORE'S DEATH.

“Present example gets within our guard,
And acts with double force.”

YOUNG.

SIR JONAH BARRINGTON, in his “Personal Sketches of his Own Times,” gives the following remarkable relation, which requires no comment. The publicity of the names in an autobiographical work, but now issued from the press, will be guarantee sufficient to justify their present insertion.

“Let sceptics draw their own conclusions,” says Sir Jonah, “perhaps natural causes may be assigned; but I am totally unequal to the task.”

“Lord Rossmore was advanced in years, but I never heard of his having had a single day’s indisposition. He bore, in his green old age, the appearance of robust health. During the viceroyalty of Earl Hardwick, Lady Barrington, at a drawing-room at Dublin Castle, met Lord Rossmore. He had been making up one of his weekly parties for Mount Kennedy, to commence the next day, and had sent down orders for every preparation to be made. The Lord Lieutenant was to be of the company. ‘My

little farmer,' said he to Lady Barrington, addressing her by a pet name, 'when you go home, tell Sir Jonah that no business is to prevent him from bringing you down to dine with me to-morrow. I will have no *ifs* in the matter—so tell him that come he *must!* She promised positively, and on her return informed me of her engagement, to which I at once agreed. We retired to our chamber about twelve, and towards two in the morning I was awakened by a sound of a very extraordinary nature. I listened,—it occurred first at short intervals; it resembled neither a voice nor an instrument; it was softer than any voice, and wilder than any music, and seemed to float in the air. I don't know wherefore, but my heart beat forcibly. The sound became still more plaintive, till it almost died away in the air, when a sudden change, as if excited by a pang, changed its tone,—it seemed *descending*. I felt every nerve tremble,—it was not a *natural* sound, nor could I make out the point from whence it came. At length I awakened Lady Barrington, who heard it as well as myself. She suggested that it might be an Æolian harp, but to that instrument it bore no similitude—it was altogether a different *character of sound*. My wife at first appeared less affected than I, but subsequently she was more so. We now went to a large window in our bed-room, which looked directly upon

a small garden underneath; the sound seemed then obviously to *ascend* from a grass-plot immediately below our window. It continued; Lady Barrington requested that I would call up her maid, which I did, and she was evidently more affected than either of us. The sounds lasted for more than half an hour. At last a deep, heavy, throbbing sigh seemed to issue from the spot, and was shortly succeeded by a sharp but low cry, and by the distinct exclamation, thrice repeated, ‘Rossmore—Rossmore—Rossmore!’ I will not attempt to describe my own feelings—indeed I cannot. The maid fled in terror from the window, and it was with difficulty I prevailed on Lady Barrington to retire to bed. In about a minute after the sound died gradually away, until all was silent. Lady Barrington, who is not so superstitious as I, attributed this circumstance to a hundred different causes, and made me promise that I would not mention it next day at Mount Kennedy, since we should be thereby rendered laughing-stocks. At length, wearied with speculations, we fell into a sound slumber. About seven the ensuing morning, a strong rap at my chamber-door awakened me. The recollection of the past night’s adventure rushed instantly upon my mind, and rendered me very unfit to be taken suddenly on any subject. It was light—I went to the door, when my faithful servant, Lawler, exclaimed on the

other side, 'O Lord, Sir!' 'What is the matter?' said I, hurriedly. 'O, Sir!' ejaculated he, 'Lord Rossmore's footman was running past the door in great haste, and told me in passing that my Lord, after coming home from the Castle, had gone to bed in perfect health; but that about half after two this morning, his own man, hearing a noise in his master's bed, (he slept in the same room,) went to him, and found him in the agonies of death; and before he could alarm the other servants, all was over!' 'I conjecture nothing,' continues Sir Jonah Barrington; "I only relate the incident as unequivocally matter of fact: Lord Rossmore was absolutely dying at the moment I heard his name pronounced. Let sceptics draw their own conclusions: perhaps natural causes may be assigned, but I am totally unequal to the task."

SINGULAR MENTAL PERCEPTION.

“ Is not this something more than phantasy ?
What think you of it ?”

SHAKSPEARE.

ADMITTING the possibility, not to say probability, of spiritual intercourse, something of the kind may well be believed to have taken place in the following instance :—

This remarkable narrative is related by Valerius Maximanus, as having occurred in Arcadia, a town in European Turkey. The incidents, supposing them to be as there stated, and there appears no essential reason to doubt them, are too singularly coincidative to be resolved in any other way than by some mental perception, or communication between the two individuals at the moment of occurrence.

Two friends, travelling together in that country, were, it appears, on some occasion, under the necessity of taking up their lodging in separate dwellings, one sleeping at the house of a friend, the other at an inn in the town. Want of room to accommodate both was, most probably, the only cause of their separation.

During the night, the one who slept at his friend's house, dreamed, as it is said, that his fellow-traveller intreated his assistance against the innkeeper, who was trying to murder him. Alarmed at the horrid idea, he rose up, but, recollecting himself, and induced by the improbability of the thing to conclude that it could be no other than a dream, the effects, perhaps, of some past feeling vividly renovating, he returned again to his bed. Whether this was a dream, or waking illusion, or apparition, is not now to be decided; but it appears that, a second time, his friend was vividly present to his mental perception; not now, however, as at first, claiming assistance against present or anticipated evil, but wounded, bleeding profusely, and saying, or seeming to say, "Revenge my death, for I am killed by the innkeeper, and am now being carried away towards the gate in a cart covered with dung." Unwilling still to consider this in a serious light, and fully impressed with the idea of its being nothing more than a distressing dream, perhaps arising from their unavoidable separation; he, nevertheless, found himself so extremely restless under the melancholy impression, that he became, as it were from some unknown cause, impelled to arise. In consequence of this almost compulsory movement he got up, and left the house, proceeding towards the gate of the town, where he was not a little dismayed at per-

ceiving before him a cart, apparently loaded as was described in his dream. It required no hesitation to procure assistance, and to have it immediately unladen, when the murdered body of his unfortunate friend was disclosed to view.

Either the whole narration is a fabrication of the writer, or of some one who has imposed upon his credulity, even to the extent of giving it a publicity, supported by the authority of a name, which ought not to have submitted to the imposition of an unfounded relation—or otherwise, it must be

“Something more than phantasy.”

REMARKABLE DREAM OF NICHOLAS WOTTON,
DEAN OF CANTERBURY IN 1553.

“ Sometimes a dream anticipates the date,
Comes as a prospect to reveal our fate.”

JERNINGHAM.

SOME of our early writers appear either not to have understood, or, at least, not to have sufficiently discriminated between the proper signification of the two terms, Vision and Dream. These have frequently been used as synonymous expressions ; nor is this, perhaps, much to be wondered at, since, even in the present period of advanced literature, this error is sometimes discernible in the writings of those from whom such negligence might not be expected*.

To whichever class the following may most pro-

* As a proof of which, “ *Genuineness and Authenticity*,” says the Rev. Lant Carpenter, “ were formerly confounded by writers of eminence. The late valuable and enlightened Bishop of Landaff probably first introduced the distinction now universally adopted making genuineness refer to the author, authenticity to his statements. A book is *genuine*, if written by the person to whom it is ascribed ; *authentic*, if the facts contained in it are true.” So, also, the terms *odorous* and *odoriferous* are generally considered as synonymous, but a recent erudite work says, “ I use the term *odorous* not in the same sense as *odoriferous*, but to include both sweet and fetid scents.” —KIRBY and SPENCE, vol. iv. p. 140.

perly belong, the relation and its concomitant circumstances, are sufficiently interesting to warrant insertion, more especially as the history of this country affords some corroboration in the contemporaneous events. The account is taken from Izaak Walton's 'Life of Sir Henry Wotton,' who, if I mistake not, was also ambassador at Paris in the reign of James I., in the year 1614,—a gentleman whom our present worthy Laureate terms, "that excellent man, Sir Henry Wotton."

"In the year of our redemption, 1553, Nicholas Wotton, Dean of Canterbury, being then ambassador in France, dreamed that his nephew, Thomas Wotton, was inclined to be a party to such a project that, if he was not suddenly prevented, would turn to the loss of his life, and ruin of his family. The night following he dreamed the same again; and knowing that it had no dependence upon his waking thoughts, much less on the desires of his heart, he did then more seriously consider it, and resolved to use so prudent a remedy (by way of prevention) as might introduce no great inconvenience to either party. And to this end he wrote to the queen, (it was Queen Mary,) and besought her, that she would cause his nephew, Thomas Wotton, to be sent for out of Kent, and that the lords of her council might interrogate him in some such feigned questions, as might give a colour to his commit-

ment to some favourable prison, declaring that he would acquaint her Majesty with the true reason of his request, when he should next become so happy as to see and speak to her Majesty. It was done as the Dean desired, and Mr. Wotton sent to prison. At this time a marriage was concluded betwixt our Queen Mary and Philip, King of Spain, which divers persons did not only declare against, but raised forces to oppose. Of this number, Sir Thomas Wyatt, of Boxley-abbey, Kent, (betwixt whose family and that of the Wottons there had been an ancient and entire friendship,) was the principal actor; who, having persuaded many of the nobility and gentry, especially of Kent, to side with him, and being defeated and taken prisoner, was arraigned, condemned, and lost his life; so did the Duke of Suffolk, and divers others, especially many of the gentry of Kent, who were then in several places executed as Wyatt's assistants; and of this number, in all probability, had Mr. Wotton been, if he had not been confined: for though he was not ignorant that another man's treason is made his own by concealing it, yet he durst confess to his uncle, when he returned into England, and came to visit him in prison, that he had more than an intimation of Wyatt's intentions; and thought he had not continually acted innocent, if his uncle had not so happily dreamed him into a prison."

“ Good old Isaak Walton,” as Southey calls him, relates also another singular prewarning in the same family. “ This before-mentioned Thomas Wotton,” says he, “ also, a little before his death, dreamed that the university treasure was robbed by townsmen and poor scholars, and that the number was five ; and being that day to write to his son Henry at Oxford, he thought it was worth so much pains, as by a postscript in his letter to make a slight inquiry of it. The letter, which was writ out of Kent, came to his son’s the very morning after the robbery was committed ; and when the city and university were both in a perplexed inquest after the thieves, then did Sir Henry Wotton show his father’s letter, and by it such light was thrown on this work of darkness, that the five persons were presently discovered and apprehended, without putting the university to so much as the casting of a figure.”

This, I believe, is the same “ Sir Henry Wotton” who “ made many inquiries whether the Duke of Buckingham,” mentioned in Clarendon’s relation, “ had any presentiments of his death, which (in *Rel. Wottoniana*) appear to have been the case, as well in the request he made to the Bishop of London ere he left town, as in the interview of the day preceding his death, in taking leave of the king, and also of the Earl of Holland. Moreover, on the day of his death, his sister, the Countess of

Denbigh, receiving a letter from him, was in tears while replying thereto, and fainted, though from no reason but that she thought her dear brother was to be gone. Dreaming also very ominously the night preceding the very day that the Bishop of Ely came to prepare her for the event."

APPEARANCE TO

SIR J—— S——, AND GENERAL W——.

“ Hard thou know’st it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.”—MILTON.

PLUTARCH, in his life of Dion, draws a parallel between him and Brutus, in the most prominent circumstances of their latter days. Thus, they were “ both cut off by an untimely death, before they could carry the purposes which they had pursued with so much labour, into execution. The most singular circumstance attending their death was, that both had a divine warning of it, in the appearance of a frightful spectre.”

“ There are, indeed,” says he, those “ who affirm that no man in his senses ever saw a spectre.”

In a late edition of Plutarch’s Lives,* the following note is inserted at the foot of the page. “ A very singular story, however, could be told upon this head by Generals S—— and W——, both men of indisputable honour and spirit, and honourably distinguished by their exertions in their country’s service.”

To whom these initials refer is, of course, not generally known; but there are some circumstances related of an appearance to a General Officer, the friend of Sir J— S—— during the

* T. Wrangham’s, vol. vi. p. 3.

period when the latter held a high station in one of our foreign possessions, the particulars of which I have heard related nearly as follows :

Sir J. and his friend the General were quietly seated in their tent, occupied in a game of chess ; an amusement which allows of no abstraction of mind, requiring a degree of attention incompatible with a thought of aught besides the impending game.

The General casually looking up, exclaimed, in a tone of surprise, “ There’s my brother come into the tent !” Sir J.— also looked up, and as well as the General, saw the appearance which, either retired, or disappeared in some way.

After Sir J.’s return to England, walking one day with a friend in London, he suddenly observed, on seeing a gentleman pass by,—“ That must be ——, the brother of General ——.” “ That,” replied his companion, “ cannot be, as he died while you were abroad.” Upon further inquiry, this was found to have happened at the very time his appearance was seen by his brother and Sir J. in their tent. The impression of his identity was, however, so far correct, although Sir J. had never seen other than the apparition, if such it was,—that the person who had attracted his accidental notice, was another brother of the General who, it was remarked, bore a very striking likeness to the deceased.

UNAVAILING AND FATAL ENDEAVOUR
TO COUNTERACT THE VIVID IDEA OF A
SUPERNATURAL APPEARANCE.

“What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,
The soul’s calm sunshine and the heart-felt joy,
Is virtue’s prize.”

POPE.

A most singular occurrence,—ideal or supernatural,—is affirmed to have taken place, not long since, in one of the midland counties of England; but, as may be readily conceived, existing circumstances will not permit an identified narration; though of the truth of this extraordinary relation, the writer entertains no doubt whatever, having had the detail from, as he believes, unquestionable authority.

A gentleman of respectability, in the middle rank of life, had been married some years to a very amiable and accomplished woman, with whom it is conjectured, from some cause or other not requisite to mention, he did not live on the most happy terms; when it was his misfortune to be deprived of her after an illness of no very long

continuance. Whether peculiarly affected by his loss, or conscious of some improper conduct towards the deceased, is best known to himself; but be that as it may, he was, from that time, forcibly impressed with the singular idea of her constant appearance at table. There she uniformly appeared to him to rise up at the back of the chair she had always been accustomed to occupy, remaining behind it, as if waiting for her usual place.

Whether this were an actual apparition, or merely an idea arising from some past feelings vividly renovating, or other mental communication through means to us unknown; the effect was such as induced the family to adopt every probable method they could suggest to efface the illusion, if such it was, but without any, the least, progress in removing the impression, which continued unimpaired by time or effort.

At length it was suggested, that one of his daughters, who bore a very strong resemblance to her deceased parent, should dress herself similar to the supposed appearance, which, from the accounts given by her father at different times, was easily ascertained; and it was hoped, that by her taking her place at the table in the manner which the supposed apparition was accustomed to do, her father might possibly, on a recurrence, become reconciled to the idea of its being his own daugh-

ter, and that the illusion might give place to the reality.

In pursuance of this plan, the daughter was dressed in so close a conformity with her deceased mother's costume, that the other part of the family were forcibly struck with the resemblance, and the happiest results were anticipated. Care was taken that she should be at the appointed spot in time, ere her father's imagination could form any previous idea, either of the regularly expected apparition, or of what was going forward; and as he took his seat at table, she rose up in the accustomed place, when immediately his eye was directed that way, and a sudden exclamation from him of "My God! then there are two of them!" or words of nearly that import, produced a general consternation; and the acuteness of their feelings may be conceived,—they cannot be described,—when they found their well designed intentions lamentably defeated by the almost immediate death of the object of their solicitude.

SINGULARLY PROPHETIC WARNING.

“ We have no reason to regard the dreams, which are related in the Holy Scriptures to have been prophetic of future events, as not inspired by Heaven ; or to laugh at the idea of a prophetic dream, as absurd or ridiculous.”—*Encyclopædia Britannica*, (art. Dream.)

NOTWITHSTANDING the sentiments expressed, as above, by the authors of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, their opinions, on the mysterious operation of dreams, have an evident tendency to disqualify the belief of their ever being of a supernatural character. In support of such a view of the subject, various arguments are introduced in that national work ; and, corroborative of this idea, they have inserted, under the article *Spectre*, a very remarkable account of a prophetic dream ; apparently, with the sole view of endeavouring to account for the circumstances from natural causes alone. To effect this object, a lengthened detail is subjoined to the relations, with an inference which, upon due investigation, may not, perhaps, be so conclusive, as they have ventured to assume.

“ We shall here,” says the writer of the article,

“ tell a story, by way of illustration, which we have received on unquestionable authority. An East Indian Captain had an honest, faithful servant named *John*, for whom he had a great regard. John died, if we recollect right, on a voyage from England to the East Indies during a French war. As the ship approached the place of its destination the captain had a dream, in which John appeared to him, and earnestly besought him not to sail to the port for which he was bound, as it was in the hands of the French. The Captain, though not addicted to superstition*, thought it prudent to follow this admonition ; and after landing at a different port, he was informed that the place to which he had intended to steer was, according to the information of the dream, captured by the French. On the voyage home, the captain had a second dream, in which John again appeared to him, and gave him notice that he should soon die, and that the ship should be taken in the mouth of the Channel by the French.

Next morning the captain called his first mate, told him his dream, which he believed was prophetic, and delivered his papers, that he might take proper care of them after his decease. Every-

*. “ This remark might,” observes Dr. Hibbert on a similar occasion, “ have been spared with much advantage.” *Vide* note on this remark in Ch. XI. page 62 of the present Work.

thing happened exactly as the dream had foretold; the captain died, and the vessel was taken by a French man-of-war in the mouth of the Channel. This dream, wonderful as it appears, is easily explained. In the voyage out to India, nothing was more natural than that the captain should sometimes be thinking, that, amidst the various chances of war, the port to which he was bound might be taken; perhaps it was a place of consequence, which the French might be eager to possess*. The captain being accustomed to revolve these thoughts in the day-time, they would naturally return at night; the regret which he felt for the loss of a faithful servant might † mingle with his apprehensions, and thus produce the dream. Perhaps the advice was such as John would have given had he been alive ‡. It is equally easy to explain the cause of the dream in the passage home. The captain, we are told, was very ill, and thought himself dying, at the very time he had the second dream §, and therefore did not expect to reach

* This *perhaps* cannot be allowed either in the way of argument or of explanation, nor even as a conjecture is it admissible; since, had the destined port been a place of the consequence presumed, the British would, *perhaps*, have been more *eager* to defend it.

† *Perhaps*.

‡ *Perhaps* again; and mere assumption, without any, the least, warranty more than the other.

§ This, however, does not appear in the narrative, neither is it of much consequence as aiding to invalidate other powerful coincidences.

England. This part of the dream, then, was only his own thoughts, delivered by his servant*. As to the other part, that his ship should be taken in the mouth of the Channel, it may be thought unaccountable how the very place should be foreseen. But we must recollect, that the mouth of the Channel, being over against the coast of France, was by far the most dangerous place in the whole passage; and that, therefore, the captain had more reason to be afraid of losing his ship there than in any other place. The use which we mean to make of this story is this: had the captain been a man of a weak mind, he would certainly have considered the dream as a reality, and believed that instead of having dreamed of the things on which his imagination had dwelled, he had actually seen his servant return from the dead, and heard him deliver the message. But, on the other hand, the captain, though he believed the dream was prophetic, mentioned it without any signs of fear; and no man of courage and reflection ever sees an apparition †. This sight is reserved for the weak, the timid, and superstitious. Of this many instances might be mentioned."

* Whether these thoughts were the effect of his own apprehensions, or whether they were supernaturally delivered by the appearance of his deceased faithful domestic; they were, whatever might be the immediate cause of their impression, eventually realized.

† This is certainly an erroneous assertion.

This story, "received on unquestionable authority," introduced "by way of illustration," and so "easily explained," is thus followed only by a string of supposititious statements, and fallacious arguments, if indeed they merit that denomination; which it were sufficiently easy to disprove, were it not too much like "breaking a gnat on the wheel;"—but which, it may be observed, is the usual character of all such attempts to discredit stubborn facts, when the sceptical philosopher finds a difficulty in controverting them. *Perhaps*, the most effective answer in this case, to these futile attempts at an "easy explanation," may be to give a further extract from another part of the same work.

Thus, under the article Dreams, we find that "Christianity, indeed, teaches us to believe, that the Supreme Being may, and actually does, operate on our minds, and influence at times the determinations of our will, without making us sensible of the restraint to which we are then subjected; and in the same manner, no doubt, the suggestions which arise to us in dreams may be produced. The imaginary transactions in which we are thus engaged, may be such as are actually to occupy us in life; the strange and seemingly incoherent appearances which are then presented to the mind's eye, may allude to some events which are to befall ourselves or others. It is, therefore, by no means impossible

or inconsistent with the general analogy of nature, that dreams should have a respect to futurity. We have no reason to regard the dreams, which are related in the Holy Scriptures to have been prophetic of future events, as not inspired by Heaven ; or to laugh at the idea of a prophetic dream as absurd or ridiculous.”

DREAMS.

“In vain would we search into them. It is an abyss in which the hand of the Diety is alone to be seen.”—Dr. VIREY.

WHETHER dreams, meaning, of course, those occurring under certain peculiar circumstances, may be considered as having any thing supernatural in their character, is a question, perhaps, not very easy to decide. Some of the preceding relations, coming under this description, seem to lend a colourable conjecture to the opinion that they may. Be it so, or not; there are circumstances, attending some of these, which so entirely coincide in their mutual relation with subsequent events, that it were, perhaps, hardly justifiable altogether to withhold a few of the most remarkable on record.

Thus it is related by Valerius Maximanus, that a Roman knight, of the name of Aterius Ruffus, “the night previous to a sword-play of gladiators, dreamed that one of the *retiarii** gave him a mortal wound. This he told to some of his friends near him.

* Gladiators who fight with a sword, and net to entrap their adversary.

It happened soon after that the combat was continued to near where they sat, and Aterius, starting, declared he beheld the man whom he had seen in his dream, and would have departed ; but while his friends were arguing on the improbability of the thing, the retiarius having overthrown his adversary, in the last struggle accidentally wounded Aterius also, so that he died on the spot."

Another equally, or even more remarkable, is found in the same author, as already narrated ; some few others of a nearly similar description have also been noticed.

In Pliny's ' Natural History*' is recorded a singular relation of what occurred in what was probably a trance, wherein Corfidius, the elder of two brothers, knights of Rome, being supposed to be actually dead, " the tables of his last will and testament were recited, in which he had made his brother the heir of all he had ; but in the midst of the funeral preparations, he rose with great cheerfulness upon his legs, and said, " that he had been with his brother, who had recommended the care of his daughter to him, and had also showed him where he had concealed a great quantity of gold underground, wherewith he should defray his funeral expenses." While he was speaking in this manner, to the admiration of all that were present,

* Lib. VII. ch. lii. p. 184.

there came a messenger with the news of his brother's death; and the gold was also found in the very place as he had said."

In the first book of Herbert's 'Travels*,' are some accounts relative to the Tartar tribes of Mount Taurus. Among these uncivilized rovers, the Molgultz were a much oppressed race, until the time of Cangius, who was then only a common mechanic. This man, it is said, dreamed that a person in armour on a white horse spoke to him thus: "Cangius, it is the will of the eternal God that thou shortly shalt be the king and ruler of the Tartars, called Molgultz; thou shalt free them from that servitude under which they have long groaned, and the neighbouring nations shall be subjected to them." This he told to the seven elders, or princes of Molgultz, which they, as indeed might be expected, looked upon as ridiculous; but, says the historian of that period, the next night all of them in their sleep seemed to behold the same apparition, commanding them to obey Cangius. From this circumstance he was elected Chan, and freed his people from servitude, conquering Georgia, Armenia, &c. Thus much is historical fact,—how far the prewarning of the alleged dream may be true, is now impossible to prove, but it may be kept in mind, that

"What none can prove a forgery, may be true."

Morrison's 'Itinerary' gives an account in which an English gentleman, during his residence at Prague, was told in a dream of his father's death, and, much affected by the circumstance, he arose and noted the particulars in a book. He, some months afterwards, heard that such was the fact; and on returning to England four years afterwards, found that it had occurred at that peculiar time.

The same individual while at Cambridge, sleeping with his brother, had a similar warning of his mother's death, and, on awakening him, found that he had dreamed the very same; but neither of them took any further notice of it, till the next accounts brought them a confirmation of the warning.

In the second volume of 'Letters from the North of Italy,' addressed to Henry Hallam, Esq.* is inserted the following very memorable occurrence, of a nature too extraordinary and too accordant with the present subject to be passed over in silence.

"In the imprisonment of Gretti under the government of Bajazet†, a being appeared" — and whether in a dream, or a waking illusion, or as an actual apparition, the effects are the same, — "to Bajazet, leading another by the hand, and warning Bajazet not to injure that man. In consequence, he (Bajazet) sent the next day for all the prisoners, and, on their passing before him, singled out Gretti

* Page 216.

† About the year 1375 to 1380.

as the same who was led by the hand of the supernatural being in the dream, and set him forthwith at liberty.”

Many other instances of a similar description might be brought forward, but it would, perhaps, be considered as too much extending the matter on a division of the subject not sufficiently connected with the argument. There are, however, two remarkable occurrences, one of very recent date, of this nature, which, if true, are so peculiarly illustrative of the occasional recurrence of such premonitions, that it may not be irrelevant to introduce them here.

In Blackwood's 'Edinburgh Magazine' for June, 1826, at page 736, is inserted the following letter addressed to the Editor:

“ Sir,

Being in company the other day when the conversation turned upon dreams, I related one, of which, as it happened to my own father, I can answer for the perfect truth. About the year 1731, my father, Mr. D., of K——, in the county of Cumberland, came to Edinburgh to attend the classes, having the advantage of an uncle in the regiment, then in the Castle, and remained under the protection of his uncle and aunt, Major and Mrs. Griffiths, during the winter. When spring

arrived, Mr. D. and three or four young gentlemen from England (his intimates), made parties to visit all the neighbouring places about Edinburgh, Roslin, Arthur's-Seat, Craig-Miller, &c., &c. Coming home one evening from some of those places, Mr. D. said, 'We have made a party to go a-fishing to Inch-keith to-morrow, if the morning is fine, and have bespoke our boat; we shall be off at six.'

"No objection being made, they separated for the night.

"Mrs. Griffiths had not been long asleep till she screamed out in the most violent agitated manner, 'The boat is sinking, save, oh save them!' The Major awakened her, and said, 'Were you uneasy about the fishing-party?' 'Oh no,' she said, 'I had not once thought of it.' She then composed herself, and soon fell asleep again; in about another hour she cried out in a dreadful fright, 'I see the boat is going down.' The Major again awoke her, and she said, 'It has been owing to the other dream I had, for I feel no uneasiness about it.' After some conversation, they both fell sound asleep, but no rest could be obtained for her; in the most extreme agony she again screamed, 'They are gone, the boat is sunk!' When the Major awakened her, she said, 'Now I cannot rest; Mr. D. must not go; for I feel I should be miserable till his return; the thoughts of it would almost kill me.'

“She instantly arose, threw on her wrapping-gown, went to his bed-side, for his room was next their own, and with great difficulty she got his promise to remain at home. ‘But what am I to say to my young friends, whom I was to meet at Leith at six o’clock?’ ‘With great truth you may say your aunt is ill, for I am so at present; consider you are an only son, under our protection, and should any thing happen to you, it would be my death.’ Mr. D. immediately wrote a note to his friends, saying he was prevented joining them, and sent his servant with it to Leith. The morning came in most beautifully, and continued so till three o’clock, when a violent storm arose, and in an instant the boat and all that were in it went to the bottom, and were never more heard of, nor was any part of it ever seen.

“I often heard the story from my father, who always added, ‘It has not made me superstitious; but with awful gratitude, I never can forget, my life, by Providence, was saved by a dream.’

“M. C.”

“*Prince’s Street, 1st May, 1826.*”

The other relation, copied from the ‘Times’ of the 8th of September, 1825, and which, it is presumed, may be verified by many persons on the spot, bears a very close affinity to the preceding. Both

strongly elucidate the necessity of not wholly disregarding such forewarnings.

“On Sunday last,” says that Journal, ‘a respectable young man, named James Williams, residing in King-street, St. George’s in the East, while on a party of pleasure with some friends, was unfortunately drowned near Barking.

“On the nights of Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, preceding his death, he was haunted by the most fearful dreams, which presented appalling pictures of drowning in every variety of shape, and with all imaginable terrifying accompaniments. The first dream he paid but little attention to, neither did he take much notice of the second ; but the third, in consequence of its repetition, making a deep impression on his mind, he communicated to his sister : she, knowing the engagement he had made for the next day, and his intention of going on the river, made use of the strongest and most sisterly arguments to dissuade him from his purpose. All her entreaties were, however, without effect ; he still, though somewhat staggered, determined to keep his engagement, and not disappoint his friends, and asked what would be thought of him if he were to assign an idle dream as an excuse for his absence. His mind, notwithstanding, was strongly influenced by the conviction, that what was intended as a day of pleasure, would eventually prove

one of mourning, and fatal to himself: he therefore told his sister, that should the catastrophe which he anticipated take place, let his body be ever so long in the water, it would be recognised by certain marks in his dress; he then punched three letters in each of his shoes, which he pointed out to his sister, and set forward on his ill-fated expedition. Boats are dragging in all directions for the body, which has not yet been found."

It has been observed that in cases of prewarning of death, the objects of the prophetic notice may have, unconsciously, been the means, by dwelling on the idea, of fulfilling the prediction. But however that may have been apparently the case in some instances, yet, in those of sudden death from casualty or other accidental causes, it cannot be supposed, in any way, to accomplish, or even to aid, the fatal termination.

APPENDIX.

“ Whence it comes to pass, that even the whole world is not an object sufficient for the depth and rapidity of human imagination, which often sallies forth beyond the limits of all that surrounds us.”—
DION. LONGIN.

[The subjoined Relation is interesting in many points of view. If it be true, it affords another most remarkable proof of the possibility of the soul's partial separation from her material habitation.]

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SINGULAR NARRATION.

Extracted from a recent publication entitled ' Foreign Scenes and Travelling Recreations,' by John Howison, Esq. of the Hon. East India Company's Service.—Printed, 1825.

“ Shake off the intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling senses all aside.”

THOMSON.

THE following narration, coming from the pen of a gentleman who, it is presumed, can vouch for its authenticity, is in itself so peculiarly remarkable, that its present introduction may not, perhaps, be altogether inappropriate.—Any further reflection upon these very singular circumstances must, however, be left to those who may be induced to bestow a more serious consideration on the detail.

In “ a voyage from Havannah to New Providence *,” it appears, that Mr. Howison, returning from an excursion to Holguin, went on board a sloop in Guibana harbour; but finding that she would not leave port till the next night, he accepted

* Vide vol. i. page 279.

an invitation for the evening from the master of a schooner that lay near.

“When the evening was pretty far advanced, he conducted me,” says Mr. Howison, “to the cabin, which was almost full of large packages, and pointing out where I was to sleep, left me alone. I felt a heavy suffocating smell, but did not think of examining the contents of the bales, and immediately went to bed. Soon afterwards I was harassed by wild and frightful dreams, and suddenly awaked about midnight bathed in a cold dew, and totally unable to speak or move. However, I knew perfectly where I was, and recollected everything that had occurred the preceding day; only I could not make any bodily effort whatever, and tried in vain to get up, or even to change my position. The watch on deck struck four bells, and I counted them, though it seemed to me that I did not hear the beats, but received the vibrations through my body. About this time a seaman came into the cabin with a light, and carried away an hourglass that hung upon a nail, without observing me, though I made several efforts to attract his attention. Shortly after a pane in the sky-light was broken by accident, and I saw the fragments of glass drop on the floor. These circumstances actually occurred, as I found on inquiry next day; and I mention them to prove, that the sensations I describe were

realities, and not the offspring of perturbed dreams. My inability to move was not accompanied with pain or uneasiness, but I felt as if the principle of life had entirely departed from my frame. At length I became totally insensible, and continued so till an increase of the wind made the sea a little rough, which caused the vessel to roll. The motion, I suppose, had the effect of awakening me from my trance, and I contrived, some how or other, to get up and go upon deck. My memory was totally lost for about a quarter of an hour, and I had no ideas connected with any thing that was not present before me. I knew that I was in a ship, but nothing more. While in this state, I observed a man drawing water from the sea in buckets, and requested him to pour one on my head. After some hesitation he did so, and all my faculties were immediately restored, and I acquired a most vivid recollection of a vast variety of ideas and events which appeared to have passed through my mind, and occupied me during the time of my supposed insensibility.

“All this singular constitutional derangement had arisen from a copious inhalation of the fumes of tobacco; for, on examining the cabin, I found that the pile of packages there consisted of that narcotic plant, and that quantities of it lay even under my bed—in short, that the sloop contained almost nothing else.

“ I should not have been so particular in mentioning these circumstances, had I not heard something analogous to them from a German oculist whom I met with in Havannah. This old man, who was altogether a very singular character, told me that the digitalis or foxglove, the belladonna or nightshade, and several other plants of a similar kind, possessed peculiar properties, which were not generally known even by the medical profession. When administered, he said, in a certain way, they could be made to act so powerfully and directly as sedatives, as to destroy all sensibility and voluntary motion, without affecting the animal life, or impeding its necessary and healthy action and functions ; but with this remarkable peculiarity, that the mind or soul did not participate in the comatoseness which affected its mortal tenement, but was more than usually active and excursive. On these occasions, however, the individual to whom it belonged had no perception of any thing of the kind. His body enjoyed an animal existence, as it were, without sensation, and nothing more. But when the effect of the narcotic was dispelled, either by counter-agents or by time, he recovered from his lethargy ; and active life, memory, will, and intelligence, returned, with a perfect knowledge of all the operations and employments which his mind had gone through, from the moment of his losing his per-

ceptions to that of his reviving and of their being restored.

“The German explained all this in the following way:—life and the soul, he said, are separate essences, though intimately connected together, and when the powers of the former have been enfeebled to a certain degree, the latter disengages itself from the body, and continues its agency unlimited and unembarrassed by the encumbrance of corporeal matter. However, on the animal functions beginning to recover their natural vigour, their immortal inmate is attracted back, by a peculiar sympathy, to its earthly tenement, and the human being, which they jointly compose, awakes to intelligence, and suddenly recollects all the ideas that have passed through his mind during the period of his suspended animation. These my friend described as often being vivid, original, and marvellous, beyond description, such as entirely exceeded the conceptions of man in his natural state of existence. After descanting a considerable time upon the subject, he related the following story in illustration of it.

“While in Germany, he had resided some months in a town which was the seat of one of the minor universities. Being at that time rather poor, he engaged apartments in a lonely house, a considerable way beyond the suburbs. Its occupants, besides himself, were an old man and his wife, to

whom it belonged, and a person of the name of Meildenvold, who was studying medicine. He lived in a very retired and singular way. However, as Engel and he boarded as well as lodged with their landlord, a certain degree of intimacy soon took place between them. Engel quickly discovered that his companion was no common character. In him reserved manners and a melancholy deportment were combined with a wildness and extravagance of ideas that sometimes approximated to madness. His conversation was abrupt and had nothing of common-place; for he never talked, except when excited to do so by some emotion; and he often made dark allusions, and expressed thoughts and opinions of such a mysterious and startling nature, that they seemed almost superhuman. He evidently avoided society as much as possible, never going into town except to attend the lectures, and always returning home as soon as they were over.

“ In addition to his apartments in the house, he occasionally occupied a small detached building about twenty yards off. He kept the key of this place to himself, and never allowed any one to enter its walls; within which he regularly shut himself at an early hour on a certain night every week, and remained in seclusion till the middle of the succeeding day. When he came forth, he was

always haggard, ghastly and dejected ; but notwithstanding this, he never failed to commence writing very busily, and to continue doing so often for several hours together. He then seemed relieved, and resumed his usual habits and appearance till the mysterious evening returned.

“ Engel’s curiosity was excited, and the more so as his companion showed every disinclination to gratify it, and repelled his hints and inquiries in the most decided manner. He also felt an interest in the young man, who evidently was in a declining state of health, and very unhappy. He had once, too, when passing the building above described, caught a glimpse of its interior, and seen some objects of an extraordinary kind, among which was a board covered with black cloth, and placed against the wall in a sloping direction, and clamped at its lower end to prevent it from sliding forwards. There were also a large trough full of water, and a number of phials and some chemical apparatus.

“ Engel had one night continued reading to a later hour than usual ; his host and hostess had both retired to rest, and every thing was quiet and solitary around him. On accidentally looking out, he observed a faint light glimmering in Meildenvold’s secret apartment, and recollected that the young man’s period of seclusion had commenced that evening. Engel, impelled by irresistible curiosity,

resolved to ascertain how his friend was employed. He left his apartment and proceeded cautiously towards the small building, though the darkness prevented any chance of his being discovered. On reaching it, he found that the windows were so high above the ground that he could not raise himself sufficiently to see through them, without climbing up the walls. This he accomplished with some difficulty, and at length obtained a view of the interior of the apartment. It was lighted by one lamp, which was hung from the roof, and the form of Meildenvold lay immediately under it, on the board already mentioned. He was habited in a white dressing-gown, and looked pale, stiff, and ghastly : his eyes, though only half closed, being dim and fixed in their sockets, Engel thought him dying or dead, and his first impulse was to force open the door and hasten to his assistance ; but on observing things more attentively, he became almost convinced, from the state of the apartment and the position of Meildenvold, that his insensibility was the effect of design. He therefore continued to watch the body, which exhibited no symptoms of life, though the faint flickering of the lamp sometimes almost deceived him into the idea that it moved, and that the countenance began to acquire animation.

“ He waited half an hour, but still no change took

place. He then descended to the ground, irresolute whether to remain any longer, or to return home and call up his landlord, and make him break open the door, which was locked inside. But he reflected that he had no right to force himself into the private haunt of any one, even for a good purpose, and therefore sought his own apartment again, and went to bed—though not to sleep, for the death-like form of his friend occupied his mind constantly; and in the morning he got up, expecting to learn that Meildenvold was no longer in life. The day advanced to noon without his appearing; but this circumstance passed unnoticed by his host, because it had nothing unusual in it. Engel, however, was in a state of anxious trepidation, and at length determined to ascertain the state of his friend by personal inquiry. On leaving his apartment, which opened into a large passage, he saw Meildenvold at one end of it, and started back, almost doubting the reality of the object before him. The young man hurried past without speaking and entered his own chamber, and shut the door, though Engel called after him, and asked him how he did.

“ Things went on as usual till the recurrence of Meildenvold’s night of retirement, when he shut himself up in the same manner, and at the same hour, as formerly. Engel was desirous of knowing

whether or not his friend would have another lethargic fit, and likewise of witnessing its commencement. He therefore went to the building as soon as the lateness of the hour enabled him to elude observation. He mounted the wall with a palpitating heart, and looked into the apartment. There was Meildenvold stretched out in the guise of death, and every thing around him in the same state as before. Engel gazed upon him for a few moments, and, then, from a sudden impulse forced his way through the window, and leaped upon the floor, and advanced cautiously towards the body, fearful lest he should wake it from its torpid state; however this seemed almost impossible, for the surface was cold, the pulsation of the heart scarcely perceptible, and the breathing very feeble and protracted.

“Engel now observed that the window was so high above the floor that he could not reach it, and make his egress in the same way as he had entered; for the wall was too smooth to be climbed, and the apartment did not contain any piece of furniture upon which he could elevate himself. The door was locked inside, but the key had been removed. He found himself a prisoner, and strolled about the chamber in a most uncomfortable state of feeling. The midnight hour, the loneliness of the place, the mysterious condition of his friend, and the

ghastly appearance of his body, as seen in the glimmering of a dim and unsteady light, excited an undefined awe and apprehension. He wished his friend would revive, yet he almost feared to encounter him, conscious as he was of having acted the spy, and viewed him in a situation which he evidently desired should be a secret one.

“ But in the midst of these reflections, Engel’s attention was drawn to the lamp, which seemed on the point of going out. He stepped upon the edge of the platform, for the purpose of trimming it; but, while doing so, the wick dropped into the oil, and the flame was instantaneously smothered. The darkness which succeeded was nearly total, and Engel remained fixed in the same spot for several minutes; but when his eyes became accustomed to the obscurity, he began to discern the platform and the white dress of Meildenvold. He seated himself in one end of the apartment, resolving to await patiently the issue of the adventure in which he had imprudently involved himself.

“ It was not till the lapse of three hours that Meildenvold began to give signs of returning sensation. Engel heard a succession of deep-drawn sighs, and soon after saw his friend raise himself up, and lean his head upon his hand. He gradually gained an erect position, and staggered across the room, and the next moment a loud plunge took place. He

arose from the bath in a state of complete resuscitation, and appeared, for the first time, to observe that the lamp was extinguished. Seizing a tinder-box, he struck a light, and Engel stood disclosed before him. His astonishment was great, but it soon yielded to displeasure, and he demanded, angrily, to what cause he owed such an untimely visit. Engel dealt sincerely with him, and related the origin and progress of his curiosity, and explained how he had gained admission into his private retreat. Meildenvold was appeased,—‘And yet,’ said he, after a short silence, ‘why should I refuse to explain the scene you have just witnessed, for it has nothing of guilt in it? I am only sacrificing my health and life to intellectual enjoyments, and health and life may surely be used at pleasure by one so disunited from the world as I am. You must know that, some years ago, I accidentally discovered that certain plants possess peculiar powers over the mind and body, emancipating, as it were, the former from the thralldom of the latter, and enabling those who know how to employ them to enter, for a time, into an existence almost purely spiritual. You see on that table various preparations of the hemlock, foxglove, deadly nightshade, and other narcotic herbs. I am in the habit of occasionally using these to produce the effects I have described, and you have recently seen me

under their influence. It would be impossible now to go into particulars ; but you must be convinced, from what you observed while I lay on the platform, that my body was then the seat of the simplest powers of animal life only ; in short, that my spiritual part had fled, or, at least, had lost all sympathy or connection with my corporeal. At present, I have no recollection of any thing during that period, but a short time hence a flood of ideas and images, of the most vivid, wonderful, and tremendous description will rush upon my mind, and bear evidence that I have partaken of a super-human state of existence. Many of these I have recorded in a book, with the contents of which I may perhaps one day make you acquainted. I will tell you more when we next meet ; but, in the mean time, I wish to be left alone.'

“ He unlocked the door of the room, and Engel departed. In the course of a few days, the latter did not fail to remind Meildenvold of the promise he had made to disclose to him some of his mysterious secrets ; however, he for a long time deferred doing so on various pretexts ; at length he fixed a night for this purpose, and it was agreed that Engel should come to his apartment at a certain hour. Engel had gone into town, as usual, on the morning of the preceding day, and some circumstances occurred to detain him there all night, and likewise

till the afternoon of the evening on which he was to meet his friend. His business being finished, he hurried homewards, and arrived there just as the hour of rendezvous was tolled by the bell of a neighbouring cathedral. All was quiet in the mansion, and he hastened up stairs to Meildenvold's apartment, but found no one in it, nor any fire nor lights, nor any marks of its having recently been occupied. Engel, after his first sensations of astonishment had subsided, thought it possible that he might have misunderstood his friend, and that his own apartment was to be the place of meeting. He hastened there, but saw no traces of Meildenvold. He strolled from one room to the other in a state of perturbation and vague alarm, and at a loss what conclusions to form.

“He at length determined to seek Meildenvold in his private apartment. He crossed the court-yard, and gained it in an instant, and, on looking in, saw him extended, as usual, on the couch; but, if possible, more pale and inanimate than on any other former occasion. Engel did not scruple to enter through the window; but on approaching and examining the body, he found, to his horror and astonishment, that life had entirely departed! Those accustomed to the aspect of death never mistake it. The stiff limbs, sharp features, and frozen physiognomy of Meildenvold showed that life would never

revisit his frame, and that he had fallen a victim to the influence of experimental philosophy, and to a love of imaginative existence. Engel had scarcely recovered from the shock of this discovery, when he began to look for the manuscripts which his friend had mentioned, but his search proved ineffectual. He immediately roused his host, and announced the death of his fellow-lodger. His remains were interred privately, for he had left no clue that could lead to a knowledge of his relations or connections, or even afford grounds for supposing that he had any."



THE END.

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